

Eight-time WRC champ predicts his 22-year-old Toyota team-mate will reign for years

OGIER HAILS MCRAE RECORD-BEATER ROVANPERA





The 22-year-old broke into the record books

By Graham Lister

Kalle Rovanpera can go on to dominate the sport after he became the youngest winner of the World Rally Championship with victory in New Zealand last weekend.

That's the view of Sebastien Ogier, the driver that 22-year-old Rovanpera succeeded as World champion, with it breaking Colin McRae's previous record as the WRC's youngest title holder.

Scottish legend McRae was 27 years, three months and 17 days old when he took rallying's biggest prize in 1995. Rovanpera turned 22 last Saturday.

Ogier finished second to his Toyota team-mate in Auckland and said "there is nobody who deserves the title more this year", adding: "He keeps it very cool and as long as he keeps doing that and keeps the feet on the ground his future looks very bright."

Irishman Craig Breen led for British squad M-Sport before crashing his Ford Puma on the same righthander that caught McRae out 20 years ago.

Full report, page 16







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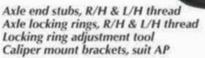
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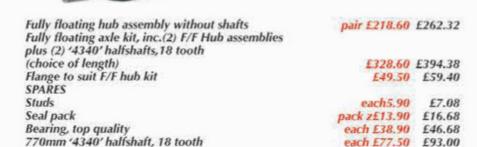
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COMMENT

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All hail the new king: Rovanpera signed off his title charge with New Zealand victory

RIPPING UP THE RALLY RULEBOOK

alle Rovanpera's march to this season's World Rally Championship became something of a formality following his record-busting year. The 22-year-old had a flourish in the middle of the campaign where he took five wins from six events from February to July.

That he sealed it with yet another win – the eighth of his career – was highly appropriate. This has, after all, been his year. There has been a lot written about the fact that he has taken five years off the record for the youngest man to win the World Rally Championship, and that truly is a remarkable feat. He easily eclipsed Colin McRae's benchmark from 1995.

Rallying is a sport where knowledge and experience are required to conquer all that is put before a driver. Most competitors will not feel comfortable on an event until they have had a few years running on those particular stages. It is something that is trotted out regularly.

Rovenpera had no time for such talk. Although he has the advantage of having started his career as a young teenager, what he has been able to achieve in such a short space of time is nothing short of remarkable.

His team-mate Sebastien Ogier thinks that Rovanpera can now go on and dominate the sport for seasons to come, and who would bet against that? When he has the level of experience of some of his rivals, there is a chance that he could have another couple of titles in his back pocket. Is Ogier's level of success beyond him? Probably not.

In this issue, we report on the Singapore Grand Prix where a delayed start almost threatened to derail the race. Thankfully it didn't, but that didn't help title chaser Max Verstappen, who had an error-strewn event and his personal title celebrations are on ice for now.

Tin-top king Steve Soper is the subject of our readers' Q&A and, in his typical forthright style, he approaches the questions with vigour. It still smarts him that he never claimed the British Touring Car Championship overall, as you can read, but he went on to have a fabulous career in some of sportscar racing's greatest machines.

Talking of touring cars, we look ahead to the three-race showdown at Brands Hatch this weekend where the British runners will go toe-to-toe. The finals day is always an epic and if you can't get to Kent, make sure you tune in to the excellent ITV4 coverage. And then, don't forget to read all about it in Motorsport News next week.

Matt James

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INTHISISSUE





P18 Tin-top drivers up for the fight

We look ahead to the BTCC showdown at Brands Hatch





P20 Readers' Q&A: Steve Soper

The tin-top 'Soperstar' tackles the Motorsport News readers' questions

Report: Singapore Grand Prix **News: Racing News: Rallying News: Sporting Scene News: Historics Column: Matt James Report: Rally New Zealand** Preview: BTCC showdown **O&A: Steve Soper** Feature: Marcus Short MN Poll: Festival winners Feature: Matthew Hirst Reports: National Racing **Reports: National Rallying** Column: Sid Smith What's on/readers photos

MN Poll: your favourite Ford Festival winners

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FORMULA I REPORT: SINGAPORE GP

Photos: Motorsport Images, Red Bull Content Pool





The Red Bull team celebrates Sergio Perez's street race triumph

PEREZ WIN PUTS MAX'S TITLE PARTY ON HOLD

Red Bull won, but it wasn't the Dutchman at the front this time. By James Roberts



It was a strong weekend for McLaren and Lando Norris

F1 RESULTS

Singapore Grand Prix Laps: 59 Speed: 90.99mph Track: Marina Bay

	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	ITIME
1	Sergio Perez	Red Bull	2h2m20.238s
2	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	+2.595s
3	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	+10.305s
4	Lando Norris	McLaren-Mercedes	+21.133s
5	Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren-Mercedes	+53.282s
6	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+56.330s
7	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	+58.825s
8	Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+1m00.032s
9	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	+1m01.515s
10	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	+1m09.576s

11 Valtteri Bottas (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) +1m28.844s; 12 Kevin Magnussen (Haas-Ferrari) +1m32.610s; 13 Mick Schumacher (Haas-Ferrari) -1 lap; 14 George Russell (Mercedes) -2 laps; 15 Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) 34 laps/accident; 16 Esteban Ocon (Alpine-Renault) 26 laps/engine; 17 Alexander Albon (Williams-Mercedes) 25 laps/accident damage; 18 Fernando Alonso 20 laps/engine; 19 Nicholas Latifi (Williams-Mercedes) 7 laps/accident; 20 Guanyu Zhou (Alfa Romeo-Ferrari) 6 laps/accident. **Drivers' championship:** 1 Verstappen 341 pts; 2 Leclerc 237; 3 Perez 235; 4 Russell 203; 5 Sainz 202; 6 Hamilton 170. **Constructors' championship:** 1 Red Bull 576 pts; 2 Ferrari 439; 3 Mercedes 373; 4 McLaren 129; 5 Alpine 125.



Fernando Alonso's landmark race was fruitless

ormula 1's return to the
Lion City produced a
typically dramatic and
controversial race – filled
with safety cars, real and
virtual. But the floodlit
streets of Singapore
wasn't to be the place where Dutch
lion Max Verstappen could claim his
second World title.

His coronation will have to wait until next weekend in Suzuka... or perhaps in the Americas.

After such a commanding year, Verstappen's weekend was uncharacteristically scrappy. Errors from his team (under-fuelled in qualifying) and himself, resulted in a lowly seventh-place finish. In contrast his team-mate Sergio Perez produced one of the greatest performances of his career to withstand immense pressure to take the chequered flag ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc.

Arenown street race ace, Perez can add Singapore to his victories in Baku and Monaco (which was the last time he stood on the top step of the podium this year).

The 2022 Singapore Grand Prix came within 50 minutes of being the first F1 race in modern history to finish on a Monday. Rain in this part of the tropics is notoriously heavy and the race start was delayed 65 minutes as a huge storm struck the city. Over 22mm of rain fell in about 30 minutes which pushed the start back to 21:05 local time.

The wet surface meant everyone lined up on the grid on intermediates, but given the 88% humidity (and 27 degrees Celcius air temp) it wasn't until 2242hrs that 'normal grip conditions' was announced by race control. It meant the majority of the GP was competed on wet tyres that had worn to slicks – but the key question was when the right time to crossover to dries would come?

At the start Perez seized the lead from poleman Leclerc, while behind in the spray the rest of the pack tip-toed around the sodden Marina Bay track. It was the defining move of the race, as the Mexican wasn't headed again, despite pressure from Leclerc and the usual interference of safety cars and



George Russell was spectacular, but couldn't reach the top-10 positions

Virtual Safety Cars as competitors clattered into each other – and the barriers.

The first misdemeanour came on lap eight when the Williams of Nicholas Latifi barged Guanyu Zhou's Alfa into the wall at Turn 5, putting them both out the race. Cue the first of two safety cars.

Then a Virtual Safety Car was deployed on lap 21 when the Renault in the back of Fernando Alonso's Alpine blew. A very unsatisfactory end to the Spaniard's 350th GP start. Seven laps later the same fate occurred to his team-mate Esteban Ocon. Between those two failures, there was a third VSC when Alex Albon buried the front wing of his Williams into the barriers.

At the first VSC, George Russell (who started from the pitlane after power unit changes) decided he had nothing to lose by pitting for slicks early. On emerging from the pits he channelled his best Gilles Villeneuve impression with graceful slides as the rear of his car scrabbled for grip. It was clearly too early for dry tyres. For a long time he was between five and seven seconds off the pace of the race leaders.

Then suddenly, on lap 33, Russell lit up the timing screens. A first sector went purple – then the second – and his pace sent everyone diving into the pitlane. But on lap 36 Alpha Tauri's Yuki Tsunoda misjudged

the grip levels with his new shiny slicks and steered straight into the Turn 10 wall. Cue the second safety car of the night.

McLaren had held off pitting Lando Norris and Daniel Ricciardo and they both benefited from stopping during the safety car. That leapfrogged them up the field and their fourth and fifth-placed finish took them back to fourth ahead of Alpine in the constructors' championship.

But behind the safety car, Perez had dropped back too far and this infringement was noted by the FIA. It was finally in the early hours of Monday morning (local time) that the result was officially declared. Perez was given a five-second time penalty, but in the closing stages of the race he'd pulled a margin of over seven seconds ahead of Leclerc, so he kept the win.

It wasn't Mercedes' day. Russell hit Mick Schumacher at Turn 1 and picked up a puncture, while Lewis Hamilton also made a mistake and drove into the wall, requiring a new nose. Verstappen tried to pass Norris and massively locked up, necessitating a new set of tyres. There was no pleasure to be had from the champion-elect: "Zero enjoyment," was his summing up of the race. That wasn't the view of those watching.

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RACING NEWS



Boardley in BTCC return

BOARDLEY BACK IN HARNESS IN THE BTCC

Carl Boardley will return to the British Touring Car Championship at Brands Hatch this weekend at the wheel of a Team Hard Cupra R.

The Hot Rod title winner stepped away from the BTCC category at the end of 2021, but will make a return to substitute for Will Powell, who is unable to take part in the rounds in Kent.

Boardley said: "[Team Hardboss Tony [Gilham] and the guys at Team Hard knew that a tempting offer for a one-off would always be greeted positively!

"Having seen the championship from the sofa so far has been strange but I am looking forward to the Brands Hatch rounds with the sole aim of trying to enjoy it. Obviously, I have ties with the team so seeing some familiar faces will be good and fitting in will be seamless."

• For a full preview to the BTCC finale, see pages 18-19

CONCERN OVER W SERIES SIGN-OFF IN 2022

There is a question mark over the final rounds of the W Series this season as the category is reportedly in financial trouble.

The all-female series hosted its latest round at Marina Bay in Singapore last weekend, supporting the Formula 1 event, and Beitske Visser took the race win. Despite retiring from the weekend's race. double champion Jamie Chadwick continues to lead the standings.

The category is due to sign off with rounds in America on October 22 and a double-header in Mexico on October 29-30.

Championship boss Catherine Bond Muir told the Telegraph that she was confident that the series would continue.

"We've had to fight from day one," she said. "It has always been a struggle but we're fighters. We're looking at our budgets. We're confident that we'll continue to raise money."



W Series is facing issues

HORNER HITS BACK AT CLAIMS RED BULL HAS BROKEN THE BUDGET CAP

Team principal anger at rival team bosses and their accusations

Photos: Motorsport Images



By Matt James

Red Bull boss Christian Horner has hit back at suggestions that his titlewinning team overspent in 2021.

Ferrari and Mercedes top brass both suggested in Singapore that Red Bull had broken the budget cap, along with another operation, which is believed to be Aston Martin

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff said: "As far as we understand, there's a team in minor breach, which is more procedural, and another team that is fundamentally massively over and that is that is being still looked after. So that's an open secret in the paddock."

Horner hit back and said that the comments were defamatory and he would seek to take action should the rumours persist.

However, Wolff was adamant that Horner knew about the overspend, despite the team head denying all knowledge

"It's funny Christian says that because it's been weeks and months they're being



Horner is ready to kick back at the accusations

investigated, so maybe he doesn't speak to his CFO [chief financial officer]," added Wolff.

Horner responded by saying: "The facts are that it is a private submission to the FIA.

"So how on earth can any team know the detail of our submission? How can any team know a team is in breach or not?

We don't even know if we're in breach. We don't know until next week, until the process has been completed.

"So perhaps when these accusations are made, people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones and you know we take umbrage and extremely seriously the remarks that have been made."



ZHOU GUANYU TO REMAIN AT ALFA ROMEO

Zhou Guanyu will stay with the Alfa Romeo team for a second season in 2023 after tying up a new deal.

Team boss Frederic Vasseur said the driver had impressed with his work ethic in his debut year after graduating into the top-flight. Vasseur said: "The way he adapted to Formula 1 in a short time has been one of the best surprises of our season. He is a very nice guy, everyone in the team likes both

his personality and attitude."

"He has had the humility to ask questions and learn, and the intelligence to apply all the information he got to improve race after race. He will have this experience to draw on next season, and I am sure he will make another step forward as we continue to grow our team."

Zhou, 23, said he was "happy and grateful" to be retained.

SIX SPRINT RACES TO TAKE PLACE NEXT TERM

Formula 1 will host six Saturday Sprint Qualifying races in 2023, the sport's bosses have confirmed

The venues for the six events will be confirmed at a later date. The need for extra funding from the budget cap has been agreed by all the squads and the plan can finally be put in place. The Sprint Qualifying format was first introduced in 2021 at Silverstone and it replaces the traditional qualifying session with a 100km race.

F1 president and CEO Stefano Domenicali said: "The Sprint provides action across three days with the drivers all fighting for something right from the start on Friday through to the main event on Sunday – adding more drama and excitement to the weekend.

"The feedback from the fans, teams, promoters, and partners has been very positive and the format is adding a new dimension to Formula 1, and we all want to ensure its success in the future."



Sprint events will return on six occasions in the 2023 campaign



Johnson will step down in 2023

NASCAR LEGEND JIMMIE JOHNSON RETIRES FROM FULL-TIME RACING Seven-time NASCAR title winner and

IndyCar star Jimmie Johnson has said he will not race full-time in the future.

The Chip Ganassi Racing driver, who switched to single-seaters in 2021, has said that he would cherry-pick races to contest in 2023 and beyond, but he would not tackle an entire season.

The 47-year-old posted a message on

social media. He said: "I couldn't have asked for a better experience in the IndyCar Series. Looking ahead, I will not return to IndyCar full-time in 2023 but will continue to look for new ways to challenge myself and participate in bucket list events."

Johnson was 21st in the IndyCar standings this season and scored two top-six finishes. He added: "I'm not

saying that I'm out of a race car and not competing at all.

"I still very much have the desire to compete. But from a full-time standpoint and what's required and the energy, effort, time away from home – all that makes all the commitments required to be your best for a full-time season – I'm just not there right now."

RACING NEWS

FF1600 TEENS CONFIRMED FOR £20K GB4 SH00TOUT

The three contenders for the £20,000 prize GB4 shootout from this year's National Formula Ford championship have been confirmed as Colin Queen, Lucas Romanek and Brandon McCaughan.

MotorSport Vision is offering £20,000 towards a 2023 GB4 campaign for winning the inaugural shootout made up of the three leading teenage drivers in this year's British Racing and Sports Car Club National FF1600 championship.

The trio each get their own Fortec Motorsport Tatuus F4-T014 GB4 cars for the Snetterton assessment on Tuesday, October 18. The shootout winner will be revealed three days later at Brands Hatch on the Formula Ford Festival's Friday.

MSV chief executive Jonathan Palmer said: "I still think fondly of my three years of Formula Ford and am pleased to give the most deserving driver from this 2022 championship a major boost to progress to GB4, where I am sure they will shine."



Trio have chance of cash



MSV TO PURCHASE SPANISH TRACK

UK circuit owner MotorSport Vision has won a tender to purchase the Navarra circuit in northern Spain following a months-long process.

The 2.4-mile track opened in 2010 and has hosted FIA GT1 World championship, Blancpain and World Superbikes. It holds FIA Grade T1 and Grade 2 licences and FIM Grade B standards. It also has a half-mile karting circuit, skid pan area and offroad course.

MSV first expanded into mainland Europe in 2015 with French airfield Couvron, which is currently becoming the world's first self-sufficient eco circuit.

As part of the Navarra agreement MSV will invest in a variety of upgrades, including complete track resurfacing.

MSV chief executive Jonathan
Palmer said: "It is an extensive and
very impressive facility and our
ambitious plans should enable the
circuit to realise its full potential. We
intend Navarra circuit to become an
internationally admired and successful
circuit business, as we have achieved
with all our other circuits."



NEW BRSCC ELECTRIC SINGLE-SEATER SERIES

Races next year followed by 2024 championship planned for new Formula Foundation-E coming to UK tracks

By Graham Keilloh

Ground-breaking club-level singleseater electric racing is set to kick off in the UK next year with the British Racing and Sports Car Club's new Formula Foundation-E.

The programme has been well over a year in development and testing for FF-E1 electric race car purchasers is due to start early next year with the BRSCC committing to standalone single-make races during 2023. All parties' goal is a 2024 full championship season.

The BRSCC has been in dialogue with Motorsport UK throughout development, and the new formula can take place within normal 'petrol-based' racing events.



Power unit promises 130mph+

The likely format is 15-minute qualifying followed by two or three 20-minute races either on a single day or across a weekend.

The car's 120kW (c160bhp) power unit enables 0-60mph acceleration of around three seconds and a theoretical

top speed of over 130mph.

Photos: James Roberts, Motorsport Images, GTWCE, Jakob Ebrey

Snetterton-based RSR Technology Ltd, which is building the cars, has scheduled customer delivery of its first six-car run for around April 2023, with the second six-car run scheduled for August. The formula is intended to attract both privateer drivers and upcoming talent.

All-new electric

contest is on way

The first public viewing for the FF-E1 is scheduled for the Formula Ford Festival on October 22-23. It will be on open display in the paddock, with the team on hand, and there will be an on-track demo on the Saturday, with full commentary and live online streaming.

A complete, fully built, race-ready FF-E1 race car in your chosen colour scheme is available for £79,995+VAT.

WINNER GOOSSENS RETURNS TO FESTIVAL

The 1991 Formula Ford Festival winner Marc Goossens will compete again in the famous Brands Hatch event this month in a Peninsula Historic Motorsport-run historic Van Diemen RF80.

The drive was orchestrated by Alan Bowles who is a Festival stalwart as a driver, running cars and marshalling, while the car belongs to Simon Langman.

Goossens, who also won 1991's UK Formula Ford title, twice finished third in the Formula 1-feeder Formula 3000 championship and has recently been competing in EuroNASCAR.

Bowles told Motorsport News: "My easy part was just finding the right driver that would befit the project, and I'm a great believer in we need a former winner. I need a pedaller who's still racing, somebody's who'll be wanting take it seriously shall we say."

Bowles had met Goossens both when the Belgian visited Brands with EuroNASCAR and when he contributed to a Festival history book that Bowles took over from late legendary commentator Brian Jones.

Bowles continued: "[Goossens] fits the criteria: former winner, nice guy, very enthusiastic, and looking forward to coming back to Brands after all these years."

The car will run as #129, as Goossens did in '91. "We have a special colour scheme up our sleeve which we're hoping that when people see it they'll go 'wow'," Bowles added.



Goossens is back in Festival

JCW GAINS BRDC QUALIFYING STATUS

Mini Challenge's headline JCW category has been added as a qualifying championship for the British Racing Drivers' Club.

BRDC membership is only open to those who have taken on-track success in a strict list of series, and the British Touring Car Championship-supporting JCW contest has now joined the list.

While usually top-three race finishes are required for BRDC membership consideration, in Mini Challenge – in line with other national series such as

GB3—it is instead finishing inside the championship's top four, from the 2022 season onwards, that can be used for applications.

Series promoter Antony Williams said: "The fact that we are now approved by the club in this way is a reflection of the highly competitive nature of the championship.

"It only serves to strengthen the view that the Mini Challenge is one of the leading championships for drivers who are looking to forge a career at the highest level of tin-top competition."



Mini Challenge JCW racers have chance of getting into BRDC



A unique Praga R1 race car known as 'Frank', with a bespoke livery by famous automotive designer Frank Stephenson, has for a limited period been put up for sale to car collectors. The car's colour scheme incorporates the national colours of Praga's historical home the Czech Republic as well as has Stephenson's hand-signed autograph. The 2021 car competed in Britcar and Goodwood's Festival of Speed, plus has been widely exhibited at events.

LUBRICATION SOLUTIONS-

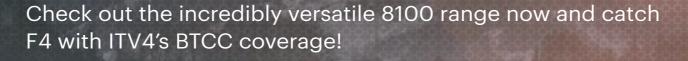
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RACING NEWS

PROCTOR AND HOWARD FORM BEECHDEAN BRITISH GT LINE-UP

Silver-Am champ joins Beechdean boss for team's Donington return; Hughes fills vacancy

By Graham Keilloh

Lewis Proctor will join team principal Andrew Howard in multiple British GT champion Beechdean's driver line-up for its return to the championship in this month's Donington Park season finale.

The team confirmed in August it had withdrawn from GT World Challenge Europe and would return to British GT for Donington's October 15-16 finale, with a view to a longer-term stay in the championship.

Howard will share an Aston Martin Vantage GT3 with Proctor in a Silver-Am partnership. Beechdean with Howard driving won outright British GT titles in 2013 and '15. The team also won back-toback GT4 drivers' crowns in 2014 and '15 and 2019's GT4 Pro-Am crown.

Proctor won 2021's Silver-Am title alongside father Stewart in a Balfe McLaren, and the partnership has continued this season in a Greystone GTMcLaren.

At Donington, Proctor Jr's Greystone GT place will be taken by Warren Hughes. Hughes won a British GT race outright in

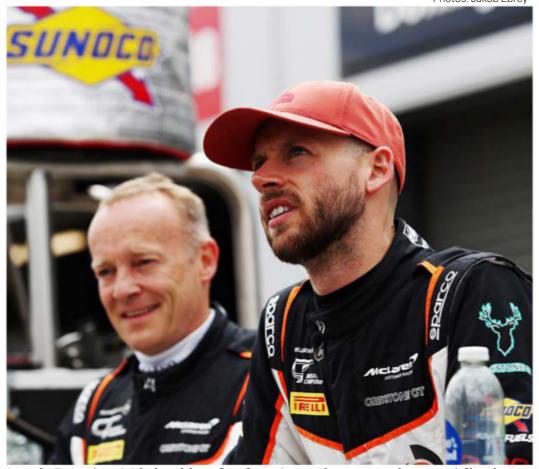


Hughes fills Greystone vacancy

2004 and 2012's GT4 crown. He last appeared in a 2020 one-off. He's coached the Proctors recently having coached Lewis for several years.

Proctor Jr said: "This move is driven by my desire to gain more experience racing front-engined cars. I have ambitions to race GTs at the highest level and most of the manufacturers competing in the FIA World Endurance Championship and GT World Challenge Europe appear to be moving towards the front-engined layout."

Hughes added: "It's such a kind gesture from Stewart to ask me to drive in recognition of the work I've put in with both himself and Lewis."



Lewis Proctor (r) is looking for front-engine experience at finale



Barwell stepping up to EVO2

BARWELL UPGRADES LAMBO FOR 2023

Bosses at multiple champion Barwell Motorsport plan to upgrade to Lamborghini's newfor-2023 Huracan EVO2 for next season's British GT campaign and hope to revert to a two-car line-up.

Barwell has traditionally run two Lamborghini GT3s in British GT but it trimmed to one car on this season's eve after reigning champions Russian Leo Machitski and Dane Dennis Lind couldn't return after Motorsport UK's ban on Russian-licenced drivers following the country's Ukraine invasion.

Barwell bosses confirmed the team will continue in British GT next year. They aim to have a two-car squad and have a line-up vacancy in Machitski's continued absence.

Barwell with the Huracan EVO2 also is expanding its European operations and aims to compete at 2024's Le Mans under its GT3based regulations.

Photos: Steve Jones

SNETTERTON: 750MC BY RACHEL HARRIS-GARDINER

OCTOBER 1-2

DWANE NURSES HIMSELF FOR CLIO TITLE WIN

Jack Dwane claimed the Renault Clio championship in unusual style on Sunday. Andrew Harding took all three race wins, but Dwane was already sufficiently ahead that he only had to finish all three to win. As he had injured his ribs in a car-destroying accident at Brands Hatch last month, he played it safe by borrowing a car and running at the back to maximise his chances.

There was no room for this kind of thing in the F1000 championship, where five drivers still had a mathematical chance of victory going into the final rounds. Defending champion Lee Morgan celebrated his retirement from full-time F1000 with two wins, but race-one winner Matthew Higginson still found himself out of the title running

going into Sunday. It was realistically between Matthew Booth and Rob Welham and the consistent finishes of championship-leader Welham were enough to succeed. He needed to be third in race three but he went one better with second spot, having passed first Tom Gadd, then Higginson.

Type R Trophy winner Jake Hewlett also needed a third to prevail over his close rival. Christopher Nylan. They began the weekend with identical qualifying times, but even wins in races one and three could not push Nylan out of reach of Hewlett, who won race two.

M3 driver Graham Crowhurst was significantly unluckier in the BMW Car Club series. He was beaten to the title by Lee Piercey in his E36 after dropping out of

the final race with serious mechanical trouble. He had gearbox issues in qualifying and started race one from the back, working his way to second behind double race winner Paul Cook (M3). These were Cook's first wins of the year.

The Ma7das kept up the close finishes, although Jonathan Lisseter had already wrapped up the title. He was awarded race one after a dead heat with Eddie Mawer. Mawer got his own back with a last-lap pass in race two.

Hot Hatches also featured a two-car frontrunner squabble, between the Honda Civics of Philip Wright and Ryan Polley. Polley had the upper hand initially in both races, although Wright was following him closely, but both times, Wright caught him out with a move in the closing stages.



RACE WINNERS

BMW Car Club Racing Race 1 & 2: Paul Cook (BMW E46 M3)

Bikesports Race 1: Joe Stables (Radical PR6); Race 2: Simon Walker-Hansell (Radical SR3)

Tindall and Sibley fend off the big stars for success

Race 1 & 2: Philip Wright (Honda Civic Type R)

Race 1 & 2: Richard Webb (Spire RGBR)

Type R Trophy Race 1 & 3: Christopher

Nylan (Honda Civic Type R); Race 2: Jake Hewlett (Honda Civic Type R)

> Renault Clio Sport Race1,2&3: Andrew Harding (Renault Clio

F1000 Championship Race1: Matthew Higginson (Jedi Mk6/7); Race 2 & 3: Lee Morgan

Armed Forces Race Race1&2: John Cockburn (BMW 330i) Gaz Shocks 116 Trophy Lewis Tindall/Tom Sibley (BMW 116)

Ma7da Championship Race 1: Jonathan Lisseter (Mazda7): Race 2: Eddie Mawer

GAZ SHOCKS 116 TROPHY



Tindall (r) takes the lead

The final 116 Trophy race of the year featured guest

appearances from a British Touring Car Championship driver - Dan Lloyd - and a former World Touring Car Championship racer, Harry Vaulkhard, but it was

regulars Lewis Tindall and Tom Sibley who were the winners.

Although they started on pole and led the initial laps, it took them some time to find their way back to the front after taking their first pitstop early. At the end, it looked as if they might not get past Patrick Scharfegger, but their car was in position in front of Antonio Almeida Souza when Scharfegger took his pitstop. Tindall credits

Sibley's flat-out speed for their victory.

Souza was second and

Freddie Tatham third. Louis Woodward challenged early but his car expired in a welter of flying parts and he parked up. Christopher and

Jack Godden started second and even challenged Tindall early on, but a trip to the pits on lap three meant they could not catch up, finishing 30th.

Lloyd led mid-race, but his co-drivers Jonny Webster

and George Adshead could not match his pace. They were 20th. Vaulkhard shared with series regular Rob Carvell. They also led for a time but a tracklimits penalty helped drop them to 11th.

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RALLY NEWS



Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Red Bull Content Pool



Doing a shoey: Rovanpera celebrates his landmark rally title victory

ROVANPERA PRAISED AFTER BECOMING YOUNGEST WORLD RALLY CHAMPION

Ogier and Tanak join Toyota team chief Latvala in paying homage to unstoppable Finn

By Graham Lister

Victory in NZ landed the crown

New World champion Kalle Rovanpera has been hailed by his peers as a deserving title winner after he became the youngest driver in history to take the crown.

Co-driven by fellow Finn Jonne Halttunen, Rovanpera put the 2022 championship beyond Ott Tanak's reach with his sixth victory of the season on Rally New Zealand on Sunday, one day after turning 22.

Sebastien Ogier, the outgoing champion who was making his first start since June's Safari Rally, finished second to Rovanpera in New Zealand. The 38-year-old was quick to praise his factory Toyota team-mate, whose father Harri nurtured Kalle from childhood star to the 19th driver to

claim rallying's greatest accolade. "Today we have witnessed history,"

said Frenchman Ogier. "It's fantastic for Kalle, Jonne and for the whole team. It's been an amazing season from him and it was only a matter of time [before he became champion]. He did it in style this weekend and that's the mark of a great champion. It was a challenging rally with really tricky conditions. Kalle was untouchable in those difficult conditions like he has been many times this season."

Ogier, who is undertaking a partial campaign this year after he in 2021 won the WRC title for an eighth time, made Rovanpera and Halttunen drink from his champagne-filled boot on the Powerstage podium in his own version of a 'shoey'. He believes Rovanpera's first championship is just the start.

"At 22 I did not sit in a rally car yet in my life," said Ogier. "He keeps it very cool and as long as he keeps doing that and keeps the feet on the ground his future looks very bright."

Hyundai driver Tanak, who won the World Rally Championship in 2019 for Toyota before moving to the rival Hyundai team, said: "No question he's done a great job this year, he pulled away very well at the beginning of the year. The boy has some history where he started off and there's still a big future ahead of him. In a way I won't accept it and we try to fight back in the coming years hopefully. But definitely he's done a mega job."

Toyota team chief Jari-Matti Latvala said: "For Kalle to have won this championship is really significant. First of all, it's amazing that a guy who

just turned 22 can achieve something like this, breaking all the records in our sport and winning the World championship. Secondly, I know that it's something very important for Finland, because 20 years is a long time for us. I came close myself as did others, so I'm really grateful that Kalle could do it. I'm also really proud of the team, that we could bounce back after the difficult weekend in Greece and score a 1-2 finish here in New Zealand."

Finland last celebrated a WRC champion in 2002 when Marcus Gronholm (see separate story) secured the second of his two World crowns. The country, which ranks rallying as its second most popular sport behind ice hockey, now has its seventh different World champion and its 14th title.

ROVANPERA ON TOP: THE WRC'S YOUNGEST 10 CHAMPIONS

Kalle Rovanpera is now the youngest World champion after he beat the record Colin McRae set when he won the RAC Rally on November 22, 1995 aged 27 years, three

months and 17 days.2020



DRIVER (NAT)	YEAR	OF FIRST TITLE WIN AGE
Kalle Rovanpera (FIN)	2022	22 years, 1 day
Colin McRae (GBR)	1995	27 years, 3 months, 17 days
Juha Kankkunen (FIN)	1986	27,7 months, 17 days
Carlos Sainz (ESP)	1990	28 years, 7 months, 16 days
Petter Solberg (NOR)	2003	28 years, 11 months, 22 days
Ari Vatanen (FIN)	1981	29 years, 6 months, 29 days
Sebastien Ogier (FRA)	2013	29 years, 9 months, 19 days
Sebastien Loeb (FRA)	2004	30 years, 7 months, 21 days
Miki Biasion (ITA)	1988	30 years, 9 months, 7 days
Richard Burns (GBR)	2001	30 years, 10 months, 8 days

GRONHOLM ALWAYS HAD HIGH HOPES FOR ROVANPERA

Marcus Gronholm always knew Kalle Rovanpera would win the World Rally Championship one day. Finland's last World champion in 2002 was

champion in 2002 was team-mate to Rovanpera's father Harri at the factory Peugeot team between 2001-2004 and has followed his younger compatriot's career in recent seasons.

Gronholm said ahead of Rally Finland in 2021: "If he can handle the pressure from the people, because everybody is expecting in Finland that now Kalle is winning he will win the title, and I'm pretty sure he will be World champion one day. He's good, a tough guy, nothing seems to stress him out."

WITH THE TITLE WON WHAT'S NEXT FOR ROVANPERA?

Kalle Rovanpera only made his World championship debut on Wales Rally GB in 2017, a handful of weeks after his first European championship start in Latvia.

But Rally New Zealand, his 50th appearance in the sport's top tier, was arguably his most significant event yet as he beat Colin McRae's record to become the youngest World champion aged 22 years and one day.

"I don't think about the age too much but it's still special to know we could achieve this," Rovanpera said after taking the WRC's top prize in New Zealand. "It means a lot, to become champion is the only goal we ever had. We have had such a good season, then a few difficult rallies and now finally

we could do it.

"I was actually more nervous on Friday than I was today. Then we needed to push hard to stay in the fight, but today we could just enjoy it [although] I felt a bit tense for the last few minutes [before the Powerstage], just wanting to get started and do your job."

Rovanpera was cruising to the World championship after he finished second in Finland in early August, having won in Sweden, Croatia, Portugal, Kenya and Estonia. But crashes in Belgium and Greece knocked him off his stride before he hit back in style to win in New Zealand.

"The biggest feeling right now is that it's quite a big relief," Rovanpera said. "I want



The new champion now has the world at his feet

to say a big thanks to the team who made such a fast and reliable car. In the more difficult moments they were always believing in us and supporting us."

Rovanpera will go back in time next when he contests the

Rallylegend event in San Marino (October 13-16) driving a Latvala Motorsport Toyota Celica ST185. He will then return to WRC duty on Rally Spain from October 20-23, the penultimate event of the season.

TOYOTA EYES CROWN DESPITE EVANS DNF

With the drivers' title going to a Toyota pilot for the eighth time and the fourth in as many years, the manufacturers' award is the next target for the Finland-based team, which lists a Brit, Tom Fowler, as its technical chief.

By netting a 1-2 in New Zealand courtesy of Kalle Rovanpera and Sebastien Ogier, Toyota has strengthened its grip on the makes' crown.

After 11 rounds, it heads Hyundai by 81 points with 104 up for grabs between the season-closing rounds in Spain and Japan. But while it was a successful trip to Auckland for Rovanpera and Ogier, Elfyn Evans and Takamoto Katsuta failed to finish.

Evans and co-driver Scott Martin where leading when they crashed into a bank and rolled on Saturday's second stage, while Japan's Katsuta, who is co-driven by Irishman Aaron Johnston, was in fifth when he crashed down a bank on Saturday's penultimate stage.

RALLY NEWS

PRYCE CONSIDERED STOPPING RALLYING IF HE WON BRC TITLE

Title winner hopes crown can catapult him to a new challenge





Hands on the prize: the champ

By Luke Barry

New British Rally champion Osian Pryce had planned to take a step back from rallying if he ever won the British title but is reconsidering now that he's actually achieved it.

After finishing as runner-up three times, Pryce won his first BRC title with victory on Rally Yorkshire over rival Keith Cronin.

Pryce told Motorsport News: "To win the British title has been a life-long ambition and I've been so focused for so many years to try and get that box ticked. Where people have said just move onto something else I've stuck to my guns and said I'm going to do it, I want that title.

"Nowadays it doesn't lead you onto anywhere to be realistic, it's a bit brutal

to say, but it's not going to give me a factory drive. But I've got that title and it doesn't matter if your name's Gwyndaf Evans, Colin McRae or whoever; I've got one of them as well and that's why I wanted it."

Pryce won't contest the Cambrian season finale now the title is sealed, so doesn't know when his next outing will be. But he is sure he wants to do something.

"I actually said to a few people that if I won the championship I wasn't going to do any more rallying in the future at this level," Pryce explained. "But I'm at the best I've been in my career so why not use it to try and slingshot me to other places or open more doors? It would be a shame to step away from it now with this momentum behind us."

NO 2023 PLANS YET FOR NEW BTRDA TITLE WINNER

Elliot Payne has yet to decide on his future rallying plans after winning the BTRDA Gold Star Rally Championship during the penultimate round, the Trackrod Forest Stages.

While teenager Payne followed the standard set by his father Charlie, who won the same title in 2016, his co-driver

Patrick Walsh added the BTRDA title to that of the British Rally Championship (with Matt Edwards in 2019).

Elliot finished second in Yorkshire to add to victories on the Border Countries and Kielder rallies as well as second places on the Rallynuts and Nicky Grist events. Payne told MN that no

decisions have been made about his rallying plans for 2023.

The BTRDA Rally Series concludes with the Cambrian Rally on October 29 when the battle for the Gold Star runner-up title will be settled between Stephen Petch, Matthew Hirst and Perry Gardener.



Payne is uncertain on his next steps after claiming BTRDA spoils

UK TITLE SHOWDOWNS IN CARLISLE

Details of the Carlisle Stages Rally on October 22 have been revealed for what will be the deciding round of both the Scottish and British Historic Rally Championships.

The event will be start and finish at Kielder Castle, in the heart of the Kielder forest complex, with the service areas in and around Kielder.

Six special stages will be used covering 44 miles in Buck Fell, Florida, Hyndlee and Riccarton. Two-wheel-drive competitors will run first on the road in reverse-seeded order followed by the four-wheel-drive cars.

Clerk of the course Nicola Heppenstall said: "We've been working hard behind the scenes to ensure a fantastic route for our competitors and believe we have a great mix of stages. The stages are in great condition."

NO CIRCUIT EVENT AT MALLORY PARK

Just after Motorsport News went to press last week came confirmation that the Dukeries Rally will not run this winter after attempts to switch the event to Mallory Park faltered.

Dukeries Motor Club's event is traditionally held at Donington Park in early December but cannot happen this year due to the circuit being resurfaced. Instead, club members made big efforts to find another suitable venue and had an outline arrangement with Mallory Park.

However, in a statement, the club said: "We've planned the outline of an alternative event at Mallory Park, with stage maps, time schedules and budgets. Following this work, we do not feel we can provide an event with

sufficient stage mileage, variety and interest for competitors within the constraints of Motorsport UK regulations."

The club went on to thank
Mallory Park for its enthusiasm
and willingness to adapt at short
notice. Instead, planning will focus
on the club's next major event at
Donington Park in March.



Newby made his rally comeback

NEWBY IS THE NEWBIE IN BTRDA RANKS

Arron Newby returned to national forest rallying to take fifth in the BTRDA event on the recent Trackrod Forest Stages in a Skoda Fabia R5.

Newby, 27, had not rallied for two years until he came out for the Malcolm Wilson Rally at the start of the season. He then won in Greystoke

in July and he's planning to finish the year with the Malton and Grizedale rallies.

He said: "Were busy with work, and we set up a new business during Covid, so I've done nothing really since 2019. It depends on available time what we'll do next year. But I won't do a championship, just

selected events."

Despite limited seat time he said before the Trackrod started: "I'd like to think we can run in the top 10. I've never done Yorkshire before, so all the stages are new."

In fact, with co-driver Jamie Edwards, they finished a strong fifth in the BTRDA pack.

OBITUARY

Cathal O'Carroll 1962-2022

The Irish motorsport community was deeply shocked and saddened by the recent and sudden passing of Dubliner Cathal O'Carroll. Cathal was the son of well-known RTE sports producer Michael

O'Carroll and the late Phyllis.
Cathal drove a Morris Mini
and was co-driven by his friend
Colm Doherty. They competed
in the early 2000s and Cathal was
chuffed to win his class in the
2005 Killarney Historic Rally,
an event he truly enjoyed. He
also had a great love of cycling
but he endeared himself to the
rallying folk with his enthusiasm
and an infectious smile.

O'Carroll is survived by his children Caoimhe, Sinead and Eoghan, his dad Michael, sisters Siobhan and Grainne and brother Michael Jr and a wide circle of good friends.

RALLY NEWS

HENRY MISSES OUT ON GRAVEL HAT-TRICK

Desi Henry admits missing out on a clean sweep of wins in the Northern Ireland Forest Rally Challenge has taken some of the shine off him being crowned champion on the Bushwhacker Rally.

Having returned perfect scores on the first two rounds alongside Paddy Robinson, Henry had his sights set on wrapping up the title with a third and final victory on the concluding event but dropped to fourth place.

Henry said: "We have had a fairly good year: six rally wins in total, and two in the championship but it would have been nice to have finished it off with a win, but unfortunately it just wasn't our day.

"To secure the title is fantastic but a win on the Bushwhacker would have been perfect. We have some great forests here in Northern Ireland and to win events like the Fivemiletown Spring Rally and the Lakeland Stages on my way to the title is special indeed."

BIRD GOES BACK TO RALLYING FOR JERSEY ISLAND CONTEST

GT racer swaps back to mixed surfaces after a late deal

By Paul Lawrence

Frank Bird will make his debut in Jersey on next week's Jersey Rally with a late deal to enter his Ford Fiesta Rally2 after a season of GT racing.

Leading asphalt rally driver Bird will contest the demanding closed-road event on the island for the first time and will be on a massive learning curve as the Jersey roads are notorious for being very narrow and very tight in places. It was a plan put together by his father Paul and Neil Buckley, who runs the car.

Bird said: "Due to my racing commitments in the ADAC GT Masters series, I've not been out in the rally car since Rally Barbados, and we didn't finish there. So I'm looking forward to the Jersey Rally. I've never been before, so it will be another new experience for me so I'm looking forward to it. The car has been updated and improved since I last drove it and it felt good when we shook it down at Teesside last week. Hopefully we can have a good run."

Bird will also compete in the Winter Stages at Croft in November in defence of his victory when the event last ran in 2019 as the Christmas Stages.





Dennis has big plans

DENNIS PLANS MORE IN SKODARU

Rob Dennis says he will now concentrate on his rallying his Skodaru from here on after selling his historic-specification Ford Escort Mk2.

The Swindon driver has not done much rallying this year while selling his business, but he's now in a position to return to competition. He has been competing for more than 30 years, including running a Subaru Impreza WRC.

Dennis has only contested three small events this year in the TEG Sport-built Skodaru, which is a Skoda Fabia R5 using Subaru Impreza running gear.

Dennis said: "I'm hoping to do more events now and I'm looking around at what to do next. I'd like to go back into the forests, so BTRDA is a good fit. But I'd also like to do some events in Belgium as well."



Giddings has shown strong pace across the campaign

GIDDINGS TAKES TO FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE IN STYLE

One of the revelations of the Welsh National Rally Championship this year has been James Giddings on his graduation from a Ford Fiesta to a Mitsubishi Lancer E9.

Giddings, 29, from Swansea had done all of his rallying in

front-wheel-drive cars, notably Fiestas, until acquiring the Lancer E9 from Ireland for the start of this season.

Giddings said: "I wanted to step up and I've quite surprised myself." He made a stunning debut on the Rallynuts Stages

in April when he was seeded at car 52 and finished ninth overall. He then went on to finish second overall to Matthew Hirst on the Plains Rally.

His main focus has been the Welsh Championship and he already plans to do it again

next year, as well as looking at the BTRDA Rally Series.

His home event should have been the Red Kite in June, but when that event was cancelled it cost him a chance to tackle his local forests for the first time.

ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

A closely fought Autumn Road Rally gave Huw Jones and Shaun Richards a first win: the pairing fought of a horde of Ford Escorts to take victory in their Peugeot 206.

Rob Stephens and Kieran Price led after two sections; being the only crew clean at that point. However, they retired soon afterwards with a broken gearbox. First place at the petrol halt was held by Arwel

Evans and Nick Bloxham, but they lost a minute with a wrong slot after the break and fell to third at the finish.

Jones/Richards had been only nine seconds off the lead at petrol and held off a late charge from Mike Roberts and Dafydd-Sion Lloyd to take the win.

Over half of the 75 starters failed to make the finish and 38 cars were on the nonfinishers list, the vast majority due to mechanical issues.

Former leading BHRC contender Darren Moon, along with navigator Andrew Lowe, dominated the Clitheronian Rally. They led from the start of an event that used such classic sections as the Trough of Bowland and Widdop Moor, to come home over a minute ahead of the field.

The runner-up spot and top expert award went to John

and Martin Gornall, who had held that position from the halfway point.

Results

Autumn Road Rally Organiser: Carmarthen Motor Club When: September 24-25 Where: West Wales Championships: None Route: 100 miles Starters: 75.

1 Huw Jones/Shaun Richards (Peugeot 205 XSi) 1m56s; 2 Mike Roberts/Dafydd-Sion Lloyd (Ford Escort) +31s; 3 Arwel Evans/Nick Bloxham (Ford Escort); 4

John Davies/Eurig Davies (Peugeot 206): 5 Owain Evans/Arfon Griffiths (Ford Escort); 6 Eilir Williams/Hefin Jones (Vauxhall Corsa): 7 Matthew Davies/Dion Lewis (Ford Escort); 8 Hefin Jones/Arwel Thomas (Ford Escort); 9 Huw Howells/ Hefin Jenkins (Ford Escort); 10 Gwilym Davies/Steffan Davies (Peugeot 206). Class winners: Evans/Griffiths; Davies/ Lewis; Robert Brown/Gareth Davies (Peugeot 309 GTi).

Clitheronian Rally

Organiser: Clitheroe & District Motor Club When: September 24-25 Where: Lancashire Championships: ANWCO ANEMMC, EMAMC and SD34 Route: 147 miles Starters: 55.

1 Darren Moon/Andrew Lowe (Ford Escort) 3m39s; 2 John Gornall/ Martin Gornall (Peugeot 206 GTi) +1m13s; 3 Jon Bossen/Rob Bryn Jones (Ford Escort); 4 Richard Hunter/ Martyn Taylor (Ford Escort); 5 Dan Sedgwick /Sam Ambler (Peugeot 106); 6 Kris Coombes/Louis Baines (Nissan Micra): 7 Richard Thompson / Niall Frost (Suzuki Swift Sport); 8 Mike Jones/Rob Lloyd (Toyota Corolla); 9 Mark Standen/ Dave Aincham (Proton Satria); 10 Merfyn Williams/Derwyn Roberts (Ford Fiesta ST). Class winners: Gornall/Gornall; Heath Griffiths/Dylan Griffiths (BMW 318Ti); Chris Way/Tom Jones (Honda





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SPORTING SCENE NEWS

NITRO RALLYCROSS: ERX MOTOR PARK, USA

OCTOBER 1-2

PASTRANA TURNS IT ON FOR THE HOME FANS

By Hal Ridge

Having struggled in the opening two rounds of the Nitro Rallycross season at Lydden Hill and in Sweden, reigning champion Travis Pastrana promised to return the stars and stripes to the top step of the podium at the ERX Motor Park in Minnesota, and he did just that.

Despite not making it to the final stages of the qualifying battle day on Saturday, Pastrana won the heat encounter to book himself a frontrow start for the final, meaning he could skip the semi-final and Last Chance Qualifying.

Saturday's Top Qualifier Robin Larsson also won his heat to progress directly to the main event, but all eyes were on the pair that finished second in their heat races.

While Kevin Eriksson rolled on Sunday morning, which put him out, DRR JC-run pair Andreas Bakkerud and Fraser McConnell both had nearidentical huge accidents in Saturday morning timed practice.

The incidents happened at the same place on the track and within seconds of each other, and McConnell's FC1-X just missed Bakkerud's stationary car as it cartwheeled over the circuit perimeter and into a lake.

Both drivers were taken to hospital as



a precaution but soon returned to the venue, while the team set about repairing the cars.

In an all-night effort, one that included stripping the rollcage from a spare car in the paddock and fitting it to Bakkerud's space-frame machine, both returned on Sunday.

Both drivers made it through to the final with strong performances in the semis, McConnell taking a semi-final win, and ultimately finished third and fourth. While Pastrana made the best start in the final and led from the front,

series leader Larsson challenged early on then elected to protect a strong points haul to drove for second.

McConnell had a relatively lonely run to third while, behind, Bakkerud dropped into the pack following his joker, but battled his way back to fourth. Making his first-ever Nitro RX final. British driver Oliver Bennett delivered a career-best drive to finish fifth, having made it to the final via beating new team-mate Jenson Button for the last qualifying spot in the LCQ, then held off local hero Andrew Carlson

for fifth in the main event.

In the NRX NEXT Supercar Lites support category, SET Promotion driver Tommi Hallman won on both days to wrap up the NRX NEXT Europe title in style. **Results**

Organiser: Nitro RX When: October 1-2 Where: ERX Motor Park, USA Starters: 25
Round 3: Group E (All FCI-X): 1 Travis Pastrana 5m23.778s; 2 Robin Larsson +3.793s; 3 Fraser McConnell +5.123s; 4 Andreas Bakkerud; 5 Oliver Bennett; 6 Andrew Carlson; 7 Conner Martell; 8 Oliver Eriksson. NRX Next Europe R5: Tommi Hallman (Supercar Lites). NRX NEXT Europe R6: Tommi Hallman (Supercar Lites); **SXS R1:** Brian Deegan (CanAm); **SXS R2:** Travis Pastrana (CanAm)

IN BRIEF

Moore in the Midland

It took a tie-break to confirm Stephen Moore as winner of the Midland Hillclimb Championship this season. Moore, driving his Mitsubishi Lancer E6, finished level on points with the GWR Predator of Johnathen Varley. However, Moore took the title on the basis of having set seven new class records during the season to the four set by Varley. Jon Maycock was third in his Mazda MX-5 turbo.

Coles claims glory

Teenager Alex Coles has won the BHC Cup within the British Hillclimb Championship. The class based competition for drivers outside the main championship was taken by the Plymouth youngster in a fantastic season in his Formula Ford Van Diemen RF86. Despite not being able to drive on the road yet, Coles handled the single-seater superbly and outscored Johnathen Varley's GWR Predator by two points in the final reckoning.

More on the hills

The British Hillclimb Championship calendar will expand to 14 events next year with the addition of a second date at Loton Park. All of the venues visited in 2021 remain on the calendar, although the Channel Islands trip in July is likely to move back a week due to clashing sporting events on Guernsey. The additional Loton Park date will come at the end of August, meaning that the Shropshire hill will host two of the final three events of the season. The opening event will be at Prescott on April 23.

FLITNEY BACK IN ACTION IN 5 NATIONS BATTLE



A busy Dom Flitney will return to 5 Nations Trophy action

Volvo C30 driver Dom Flitney will make his first Supercar start away from Lydden Hill in the ninth round of the British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy at Dreux in France next week.

Eight drivers will travel from the UK and Ireland to take on the French contingent as part of a 34-strong Supercar line-up. Flitney contested the opening double-header of the 5 Nations BRX campaign at Lydden Hill and raced in the Nitro Rallycross event held at the Kent circuit, but work commitments have prevented him from competing in further events.

"Harvest, onions, wheat, that's basically the reason I haven't been able to race as much I would have liked this season," Flitney told MN. "I race all that I can. The early harvest changed things this year, but the Dreux dates work out well, which is great. The field is really strong, so we will see how we get on, but of course I want to do well. I love every time I can get in the car, and on a new track that is even better, especially as I have only raced the Volvo at Lydden Hill so far since I got it. I can't wait."

Photos: Ant Jenkins

BRISCA F2 ROUND-UP Lobb takes **Taunton glory**



Webster won on the shale

Charlie Lobb was the BriSCA Formula 2 final winner at Taunton for the third time this season while runner-up Charlie Guinchard took another step towards securing the coveted silver roof.

Demoted to the blue grade for October, Lobb made rapid progress to third behind Matt Linfield and Kurt Selway. He picked them off to lead before half-distance as National Points Series leader Guinchard, with Harley Burns following in his wake, motored through the field.

With Guinchard up to second, Burns began nibbling at his rear bumper. He nudged the British champion wide to take the place with five laps to go, but got hooked up with a backmarker a lap later. That gifted Guinchard second and, while he could not catch Lobb, he extended his lead over the absent Dave Polley in the National Points Series.

On the loose at Northampton, two-time shale points champion Billy Webster took his first final win of the season. Several drivers crashed out at the start on a heavily watered track, including heat winner Daz Shaw. Danny McCarthy, in his first year in the formula, led until mid-race when he clashed with a backmarker. That handed Webster the lead and he was unchallenged thereafter.

Mark Paulson

Organiser: Spedeworth When: October 1 Billy Webster; 2 Reece Cox; 3 Andrew Palmer 7 Luke Woodhull; 8 Tom Bradley; 9 Simon Welton

Organiser: GMP Scotland When: October 1 Where: Cowdenbeath Racewall Starters: 12. 1 Gordon Moodie; 2 Mika Millar; 3 Craig Wallace 4 Liam Rennie; 5 Stephen Forster; 6 Paul Reid; 7 Peter Watt: 8 Marc Fortune: 9 Craig Reid:

meatharpe Stadium, Taunton Starters: 36. 1 Charlie Lobb; 2 Charlie Guinchard; 3 Aaron Vaight; 4 Matt Linfield; 5 Adam Rubery; 6 Steven lbert; 7 Andrew Palmer; 8 Leah Sealy; 9 Paul Moss; 10 Adam Pearce.

Organiser: Crimond Raceway When: October 2 Where: Crimond Raceway Starters: 11. Ryan Farquhar; 5 Graham Kelly; 6 Jason McDonald 7 John Hogg; 8 Josh Walton; 9 Laura Dawson; 10

ARMSTRONG TO TACKLE RX150 ROUNDS

Junior World Rally Championship titlecontender Jon Armstrong will return to rally cross for the final round of the singlemake RX150 series that runs within the British **Rallycross Championship** 5 Nations Trophy at Lydden Hill next month.

Armstrong, who finished second in the Junior WRC 2022 campaign following a

tense season-finale in Greece last month, has previously made selected appearances in the singlespecification RX150 machines, but will join the rest of the field in sampling the revised Lydden Hill layout for the first time in the final round.

"It's brilliant to be able to compete again in the RX150s which I have to

say are brilliant fun," said Armstrong, whose victory hopes at Lydden Hill in 2019 were dashed by a clash with former British **Touring Car Championship** ace Tom Onslow-Cole.

He added: "Lydden Hill is an awesome venue too so I'm really looking forward to it."

Ben Hardy has already claimed the RX150 crown.



Armstrong will return to rally cross competition

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HISTORICS

EX-WORKS 1965 HILLMAN IMP **Current owner:** Richard Claydon



The Imp has original parts

It was a works car

This ex-works Hillman Imp (FRW 304C) was built in September 1965 and competed in a series of international rallies in 1967. starting with the Monte Carlo Rally in the hands of Peter Harper and Robin Turvey. Andrew Cowan then used it in the Tulip and Alpine rallies before it was converted to Group 6 trim ahead of the 1967 RAC Rally, when it was due to be driven by racer Gerry Birrell. Unfortunately, the rally was cancelled just before the start after the outbreak of foot and mouth disease.

Richard Claydon owns it now

Claydon says: "I'm an Imp fan and I've been involved with Imps since 1981 when I had my first one. FRW has got quite a history and we've had it about 12 years or so. We rescued it from Andrew Cowan's barn after finally getting Andrew to agree to sell it to me. Andrew had it as a personal car and I think Rootes just forgot about it."

Cowan owned it for many years

"Then it went into his barn and he used it for local events, including autocross. Then Rootes was absorbed into Chrysler, and the competition department was dissolved. The people at Rootes forgotabout it and Andrew had it in his barn and there he kept it. Andrew had two other works Imps as well. He had Margaret Mackenzie's car and another one of his own cars."

It has been restored

"A lot of work has been done on the car mechanically by a guy called Clark Dawson. He's up in Scotland and he's the works rally Imp guru and it has all been restored exactly as it should be. It is a 1965 car and you can see from the condition that it gets used. It mainly does sealed-surface events and it doesn't really get used on loose surface events."

It remains very original

"It gets used on navigational events and scenic tours within limits, given the fact it's a valuable car. It is still very original. When we bought the car, it had still got the original Group 6 front brakes on it, essentially Formula Ford front brakes. So we kept them on but originally it would have had drums on the front. That's the only real difference to how it would have been in 1965."

ALPINE RALLYING ICON TO RETURN TO ACTION FOR THE 2023 SEASON

Ex-works Renault to make a stage comeback in UK battler's hands

By Paul Lawrence

The Renault Alpine A110 used by John-Pierre Nicolas to win the TAPRally in 1971 is set to return to UK competition next season.

The rare ex-works Alpine has been acquired by Ford Escort Mk2 driver Steve Ward and is currently being rebuilt ready for what Ward promises will be a return to gravel rallying in the UK.

The factory car won the TAP Rally in Portugal in 1971 and was then used by Nigel Hollier for the 1973 RAC Rally. When it came to the UK, the car was re-registered to FOH 818L and used by Hollier and Peter Smith on a range of UK events in 1972 and 1973.

More recently, it was owned for many years by marque



historian Tim Moores.

Ward said: "I waited for four years to buy it and ran it at Goodwood this summer. There are very few original Group 4 Alpines that survive and even less right-hand-drive models. I've not rallied it in anger yet, but I do plan to do selected events when it is

ready, hopefully from the middle of next year."

Many of the Alpine's parts are unique, including the gearbox, crown wheel and pinion and suspension. "We have rebuilt the 1800cc engine and rebuilt the gearbox. The car has been completely renovated including the bodywork, transmission and axle but the basis of the outstanding renovation carried out in 2005 still exists," added Ward.

The Alpine has already had an initial test at Sweet Lamb and Chester-based Ward now plans to take it back into gravel rallying.

IN BRIEF

Wyedean notables

Notable among the historic entries for the Wyedean Stages (October 15) is Andrew Stokes who, as a youngster, competed on the inaugural Wyedean in 1975 and will be back 47 years later in his Ford Escort Mk1. Meanwhile. locals Roger Matthews and Paul Willetts, friends for over 40 years, will team up in Matthews' Ford Escort Mk1 RS1600.

Carlisle battle

A strong contingent of British Historic Rally Championship contenders have already entered the sixth and final round of the season, the Carlisle Stages on October 22. The title battle is now down to Henri Grehan (Ford Escort Mk2) and Matt Edwards (Fiat 131) and they will head the historic field away from the start at Kielder Castle.

Silverstone finals

Several HSCC championships will be resolved during the Club's Finals Meeting at Silverstone on October 15-16. Although a couple of titles have already been secured, notably Historic Formula Ford for Samuel Harrison and Historic Formula Ford 2000 for Benn Simms, others are at stake as many categories have a double-header to wrap up the championship season.

Rostrum for Watkins

Dave Watkins finished third in class in his local Trackrod Historic Cup in his ex-works Ford Escort Mk1. With his regular twin-cam engine away being rebuilt, Watkins ran the car with the BDA engine he used for the rally stage at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Co-driver Dave Shepherd was calling notes in the dark for the first time on Friday night.

Egglestone's ready

Stuart Egglestone celebrated his 50th birthday last Thursday by completing the recce for the Chris Kelly Memorial Rally on the Isle of Man. Egglestone and co-driver Brian Hodgson were preparing for the event with their Pinto-powered Ford Escort Mk2. The island is one of Egglestone's favourite venues and the trip came after a foray to Donegal in June.

Escort for Easson

Jeremy Easson and Mike Reynolds have acquired the ex-Craig Salter Ford Escort Mk1 to rally alongside their Datsun 240Z. Easson has not rallied an Escort for nearly a decade but with parts for the 240Z becoming harder to find, the two-litre Holbay-powered Escort will be used on some events and was given a first outing on the recent Trackrod Historic Cup.

PRIME MOVER LORRAINE GATHERCOLE PASSES





Gathercole (right) was a competitive racer in her own right

been deeply saddened by the death of Lorraine Gathercole after a battle with cancer. The 57-year-old was hugely popular in historic racing and

served as chair of both the British Women Racing Drivers' Club and the Motorsport UK historic committee as well as being an active competitor.

Lorraine started racing in 1995 in an MG Midget and progressed into historic racing alongside her husband David. She raced in

The historic racing fraternity has Formula Ford, Formula Junior, Formula 2 and sportscars until her illness developed. She even tackled the 2019 Roger Albert Clark Rally in a Ford Escort Mk1.

> Behind the scenes, Lorraine worked tirelessly for historic racing and for women in motorsport, as well as working in David's race engine business.

She was a full-of-life character who brought sunshine to any race paddock and will deeply missed across the sport.

Lepley Jr looks for expanded campaign

James Lepley, the younger brother of George, plans to do more events in 2023 after a challenging year in his historicspecification Ford Escort Mk2.

Lepley had his best finish so far on the Woodpecker Rally when he was third in the BTRDA historic class. Previously he'd retired from the Malcolm Wilson and Kielder Forest rallies and missed the Nicky Grist due to Covid.

The two-litre Warrior engine Escort had an engine rebuild and work to the axle, gearbox and propshaft in the run up to the Woodpecker to try and find better reliability. Lepley said: "The Woodpecker was my sixth forest event, but I hadn't done many miles!'



Lepley has made the switch

MAGSON MAKES LONG-AWAITED RETURN

Steve Magson took his rare rear-wheel-drive Vauxhall Astra back into competition on his local Trackrod Rally recently, six months after rolling the car out of the Malcolm Wilson Rally. "We rolled it into a pond and it has taken this long to get it back together," said Magson who went all over the country to source panels. "I've done most of the Trackrod Rallies, and its forerunner, since it started in 1979.



Lotus returns for British competition outings in French hands

ALotus 23B is back racing in the UK after 25 years in the ownership of French racer Carol Quiniou.

Scotsman Kieron Baillie has owned the sports-racing car for three seasons and is racing it in this

season's Guards Trophy as he builds experience in the car. Once owned by Swiss racer Herbert Muller, the

Lotus was also used on the hills and was later restored by Simon Hadfield.

Baillie said: "It's had a varied history and I've driven it on the hills as well as racing it. I did the Classic Doune hillclimb with it earlier this year."

Baillie also owns a Lotus 7 for speed events and has shared the 23B with his friend Donald Laird.

COLUMNIST

MATT JAMES



MN's editor is looking forward to the BTCC showdown at Brands Hatch



here is something irresistible about the British Touring Car Championship finals day. While the whole season's work is compressed into just three last blasts around Kent, the effort and the determination even to get into the fight is a year-long effort.

What the three-race run-in also delivers, as well as the door handle-to-door handle action that is the calling card of the BTCC, is an unparalleled insight into the character and make-up of the drivers' personalities, and that is something that is always fascinating to watch.

They are under the most intense spotlight in the build-up to the weekend, and then have to ride the roller coaster of emotions as the swings and roundabouts of a tin-top weekend are thrown at them.

We have spoken to the three major contenders ahead of the meeting at Brands Hatch this weekend, and there is a common theme from them all. Ash Sutton, Jake Hill and Tom Ingram are all talking a good game, and each has a justifiable claim to the silverware.

While Sutton and Ingram have been in this cauldron before, Hill hasn't and how he copes with the curveballs that will inevitably come his way on Sunday will be fascinating to watch. He is on home ground at Brands Hatch and he knows that he has some superb equipment to use in the MB Motorsport BMW 330e M Sport. He knew that stepping

into the WSR-run machine would be the final part of his career jigsaw to conquer the BTCC, and he has maximised everything that has been put in front of him this year. It is notable, too, that he has ironed out some of the impetuousness that he might have shown in previous campaigns. He is in a good place, but going up against two of the category's acknowledged masters is something that is going to be hard work.

Sutton says he is genuinely looking forward to the battle. He and his tight-knit team of engineers have turned the Motorbase Ford Focus from an average touring car into a very strong one, and it is likely to be well suited to the 2.4-mile grand prix configuration of Brands Hatch. When Sutton won his first BTCC crown in 2017, he stated that he wanted to go on to become a true touring car great. Two titles later and he is on the cusp of equalling Andy Rouse and Coin Turkington's benchmark of four titles. And if there is one thing Sutton does, it is



Hill has set out his stall for a shot at the 2022 title



Ash Sutton is aiming to make BTCC history

deliver on his promises. He will be right in the heart of it and has felt the pain of a tough weekend at Brands Hatch before, only to bounce back and claim the silverware. He knows that nothing is over until the final chequered flag of the campaign.

Perhaps one of the most heart-breaking bits of ITV footage came right at the end of the 2018 competition when Ingram lost out to Turkington in the battle for the trophy. There was a clip with audio from the pits-to-car radio as the then-Toyota driver realised he had lost out. He was on the radio and asking "is that it? Is it really over for me?" The Speedworks team confirmed to him that yes, his shot had gone. There was a long silence and then, choking back the tears, he apologised to the team for his shortcomings.

He knows the pain of losing the title, and that will be his motivation this year to make sure that he doesn't visit those depths again. He, like Sutton, is very relaxed about what is to come this weekend and, if anything, says he is looking forward to this showdown more than any that he has been involved with before.

Whoever prevails and climbs on to the top step of the rostrum on Sunday night will have deserved it but spare a thought too for the two who have lost out. They have been on the same journey as the title winner but will have come up just short. Then it is time to regroup, refocus and go again: but they have all made it a fascinating season, that is for certain.

"The showdown brings out the personality of the drivers like no other meeting"



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WRC REPORT: RALLY NEW ZEALAND





Not everyone was welcoming

alle Rovanpera
didn't need to win
in New Zealand to
become the youngest
winner of the World
Rally Championship,
such was his points
margin over Ott Tanak ahead of
the WRC's return to the
Southern Hemisphere.

But for the Finn with a thing for winning, the title, believe it or not, was always secondary to chasing victory number six of the season – and his eighth in total – particularly when he moved in front after nine stages to celebrate his 22nd birthday in style.

Fourth and 7.2 seconds behind Tanak at the end of day one, Rovanpera was immense in the Saturday rain, snatching the lead two stages in and returning to Auckland for the overnight halt with a 29s advantage, having gone quickest three times during the leg.

He was a winner again on Sunday morning's opener and reached the deciding Powerstage 31.2s clear of Toyota team-mate Sebastien Ogier, the

RESULTS

World Rally Championship round 11/13
Event: Rally New Zealand Where: Auckland When: Septmeber 29-October 2

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	ITIME
1	Kalle Rovanpera/Jonne Halttunen	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	2h48m01.4s
2	Sebastien Ogier/Benjamin Veillas	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+34.6s
3	Ott Tanak/Martin Jarveoja	Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+48.5s
4	Thierry Neuville/Martiijn Wydaeghe	Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+1m58.8s
5	Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson	Hyundai i20 NRally1	+3m55.3s
6	Hayden Paddon/John Kennard	Hyundai i20 N Rally2	+10m03.7s
7	Lorenzo Bertelli/Lorenzo Granai	Ford Puma Rally1	+10m39.0s
8	Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak	Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+12m36.8s
9	Shane van Gisbergen/Glen Watson	Skoda Fabia R5	+13m28.8s
10	Harry Bates/John McCarthy	Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+16m51.6s

WRC2 Open: Paddon/Kennard **WRC2 Junior:** Bates/McCarthy **WRC2 Masters:** Armin Kremer/Ella Kremer **Championship positions:** 1 Rovanpera 237; 2 Tanak 173; 3 Neuville 144; 4 Elfyn Evans 116; 5 Takamoto Katsuta 100; 6 Craig Breen 77; 7 Esapekka Lappi 58; 8 Sebastien Ogier 55; 9 Dani Sordo 49; 10 Gus Greensmith 36; etc. **Next round:** Rally Spain, October 20-23

outgoing World champion.

With the title – Finland's first since 2002 – at stake, the rarely flustered now-22-year-old admitted there were some nerves ahead of the rally-deciding Powerstage as he waited patiently to make history.

"I was actually more nervous on Friday than I was today," Rovanpera said.
"Then we needed to push hard to stay in the fight, but today we could just enjoy it [although] I felt a bit tense for the last few minutes [before the Powerstage], just wanting to do my job."

Bettering Tanak's time by 0.6s through the 4.2-kilometre closer alongside co-driver and compatriot Jonne Halttunen, Rovanpera claimed five bonus points, the rally win and the World title aged 22 and one day, a remarkable achievement in only his third season competing at the sport's top level.

"It's quite a big relief after such a good season," Rovanpera said. "It was a small wait after a few difficult rallies, but the biggest thanks goes to the team—they made this rocket. Even after all the difficult rallies they were believing in us

and giving us all the support."

Like Rovanpera, Craig Breen also took three stage wins on Saturday. But, unlike his Toyota-driving rival, the Irishman had long since dropped out of the victory fight, his miserable run of results continuing courtesy of an off on stage five, which he'd started 2.6s adrift of the lead aboard his Ford Puma Rally 1.

Breen's crash down a bank was on the same right-hander where Colin McRae got caught out 20 years ago, also at the wheel of an M-Sport Ford. But knowing even the best get it wrong at the turn offered zero consolation for the troubled Breen.

Having taken the lead on stage two before extending his advantage to 3.3s on the next run, Breen's challenge was spent on the repeat of the Whaanga Coast stage.

But although he failed to score in New Zealand – a puncture on the Powerstage meant no bonus points and a lowly 19th-place finish – Breen's trio of stage wins was at least a demonstration of what might have been.

There could have been a fourth Breen



Ogier took second position on his return to the Toyota Gazoo squad

stage win on Thursday evening's superspecial in Auckland, but Tanak was quicker by 0.9s on an ever-drying surface. And having misjudged the first donut section, Rovanpera was a whole 2.6s slower than Tanak, describing his effort as a "bad run", which would be an exception to the rule, however.

Indeed, Rovanpera barely put a wheel wrong thereafter and by starting first on the road on leg one, he was able to avoid the heavy showers that struck on

Still, Tanak was 7.2s ahead after Friday's action to the extent Rovanpera would not be champion if the positions went unchanged.

But Tanak's chances would take a hit when technical checks revealed a hybrid overboost on his i20 N Rally1 on two stages and resulted in 15s of time penalties – five seconds for the first offence and 10s for the repeat offence. Rovanpera's Yaris also exceeded the same parameters but on one stage, leading to a five-second penalty only.

The rule infringement was a blow to Tanak, who'd excelled in the damp

Friday morning stages, only to drop back when a drier line formed and his higher road position – coupled with a handling issue – proved far from ideal.

Having slipped from first to third on stage five, Tanak was back ahead at the completion of the opening leg. However, the combination of his time penalties and a transmission issue left Tanak 46.4s behind the top two ahead of Sunday's closing leg.

Although the Estonian was fastest on stage 15, there would be no late bid for victory with Rovanpera not only



Tanak took a podium for Hyundai

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Kalle Rovanpera (right) and co-driver Jonne Halttunen entered the record books with the rally victory



It was another disappointing outing for the M-Sport team and for Irishman Craig Breen in particular

protected by second-placed Ogier but setting an unbeatable pace out in front.

Despite having not started a WRC event since June's Safari Rally, Ogier was soon in his stride. With the fastest time on stage five, Ogier led his Toyota team-mate Elfyn Evans by 1.3s. The Frenchman maintained his edge through stage six but was then unable to avoid striking a low-hanging tree branch with the rear of his Yaris.

The Japanese machine was left with part of its rear spoiler missing and the loss of downforce in the wet conditions dropped him to third after Friday's leg, 6.7s behind new leader Tanak.

By arriving late for SS12 and incurring a 10s penalty, Ogier's focus was very much on preserving Toyota's one-two rather than pushing for victory.

"I feel happy to be here," said Ogier, who missed out on winning on his New Zealand debut in 2010 by 2.4s to Jari-Matti Latvala, Rovanpera's Toyota team boss. "But being here and witnessing the moment [when Rovanpera became champion] is good being part of it and playing a role for the team has been

good. I am happy with my comeback after three months. The result is not too bad for a rally which has been challenging and quite fast."

From the high of his Acropolis Rally victory last month, Thierry Neuville experienced a low in New Zealand. After spinning twice on Friday in his efforts to find rear grip from his ill-handling Hyundai, the loss of third gear on Saturday morning meant more delay and more frustration. Fifteen seconds of hybrid overboost penalties left him fourth at the finish and almost two minutes behind his team-mate Tanak after he held a slide during the Powerstage.

For Tanak third place means he's still on track to beat team-mate Neuville to the championship runner-up spot, nevertheless. "We were having some transmission troubles on Saturday and since we already had one in Greece, we had to manage it as good as possible so we did not lose too much," Tanak said.

Gus Greensmith relished his moment in the spotlight after he went fastest on the first visit to the Whaanga Coast stage, his first fastest time on a gravel stage in the WRC. But the combination of the weather and excessive tyre wear left him fifth heading to Saturday's action. Sadly for M-Sport's British hopeful his challenge was up a handful of kilometres into stage 10 thanks to a huge crash, which left the road blocked and would ultimately cause the stage to be canned. After rolling, the Ford Puma Rally 1 was declared unfit for further battles.

Takamoto Katsuta's unbroken run of points finishes came to an end when he crashed his Toyota down a bank on a SS12 left-hander and was unable to take the Sunday morning restart.

A spin and a lack of power caused by a misfire were among Oliver Solberg's gripes. But the young Swede came through to finish fifth behind Hyundai team-mate Neuville and ahead of WRC2 winner Hayden Paddon, the home hero competing in a Hyundai i20 N Rally2.

Lorenzo Bertelli's debut in a Rally1 car ended with the Italian finishing seventh overall, his best WRC finish to date.

Photos: mcklien-imagedatabase.com, Red Bull Content Pool

SHUNT CAPS A TROUBLED TIME FOR WELSHMAN EVANS

Out of contention for the World Rally Championship title after retiring from the podium battle in Greece last month with a technical issue, Welshman Elfyn Evans had nothing to lose ahead of his Rally New Zealand debut.

Without a win in 2022, the WRC's runner-up in 2020 and 2021 showed early promise when he went fastest on the first visit to Te Akau South, the rally's longest stage at 19.56 miles, on Friday morning.

He was 1.3s behind Sebastien Ogier ahead of its rerun in the afternoon only to drop precious seconds when he was caught out in heavy rain, reporting a lack of visibility and plenty of aquaplaning.

With overnight leader Ott Tanak penalised (see main report), Evans began Saturday's leg at the head of the pack. He was in front by 2.9s prior to stage nine where everything went wrong for Evans and co-driver Scott Martin after they spun into a bank and rolled.

Although they made it back to midday service in Auckland after making running repairs – including filling a leaking radiator with rainwater – checks revealed damage to the rollcage of their Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 and they were forced to retire from fourth position.

"In a downhill braking we were a bit too fast and lost control of the rear of the car," Evans said. "There was no chance to recover it with the throttle and we touched the bank on the inside and rolled the car. Thankfully we landed on our wheels and were able to carry on. Cosmetically the car didn't look so good but it was still driving remarkably well. There was a small leak which we managed to plug so that we could bring the car back to service, but unfortunately there was some rollcage damage detected and we had to retire."



There was more disappointment for Toyota man Evans

TRACK STAR SHINES ON NZ TEST

While everything was expected from WRC2 winner Hayden Paddon, it was the opposite for his fellow New Zealander Shane van Gisbergen.

The double Australian Supercars champion, 33, had only rallied four times and never at WRC level. But in a field lacking the WRC2's big guns – apart from Kajetan Kajetanowicz –van Gisbergen scored an unlikely podium, coming home third behind Paddon and his fellow Skodadriving Pole.

"The result is just a bonus," van Gisbergen said afterwards. "The whole weekend was pretty epic. The weather made it pretty difficult for us all, but it was all about learning and improving and the pacenotes got better as well. This weekend was a bit like a weekend off-I'm a bit tired but I feel good."

The Bathurst 1000 is next for van Gisbergen on Sunday but a future WRC return hasn't been ruled out.

"I love what I do as a job in Supercars and if I can do this outside of that I'd love to. I love the roads here in New Zealand – I'd like to do more here and get a car for the full season – that'd be quite cool. If the dates line up I'll try to be there."



Van Gisbergen was highly competitive on the NZ stages

PREVIEW: BTCC SHOWDOWN

THE BTCC BOILING POINT: FOUR GUN FOR THE CROWN AT BRANDS

Matt James talks to the top contenders ahead of this weekend's tin-top showdown

here are 45 racing laps around the Brands Hatch Grand Prix layout on Sunday that will determine the outcome of the British Touring Car Championship. Four drivers will go hunting for glory over the 110 miles, and only one will prevail.

While a finals day shootout for the BTCC is not unprecedented, what is remarkable about this year's competition is how close the protagonists are.

Reigning champion Ash Sutton heads the way in his Motorbase Performance Ford Focus but he is only five points clear of the MB Motorsport BMW of Jake Hill. And hard on their heels is the Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai of Tom Ingram.

Colin Turkington has a long shot at the crown in his WSR BMW 330e M Sport too, some 27 points from the summit.

The heat is on, and nowhere is it more evident than on the BTCC's finals day. Sutton is gunning for a record-equalling fourth crown and that means he has been in the pressure cooker environment of the last-chance saloon before.

With the new hybrid rules introduced into the series for 2022, the tin-top landscape has changed somewhat, so this year's showdown offers something different for all of the contenders. And Sutton knows that the outlook will be like nothing he has experienced before.

"In past seasons, I have been the hunter rather than the hunted," he says. "Having said that, I went to Brands on top of the table last year but we had a nice points buffer and so there was less pressure. This time around, there are a lot of new things going on.

"Tam in a front-wheel-drive car for a start, and we are going to a track where I have never raced my car before. I feel relaxed, more than anything, in terms of the championship. I know, though, like always, I probably won't sleep a wink on Saturday night...

"So long as we can hit the ground running with the car, I think we have just got to put our best foot forward."

One of the positive aspects of the final weekend is that it takes place at Brands Hatch. The long circuit levels out any differences between front- and rearwheel-drive machines, so the gloves can come fully off. The season decider will be an open fight, and

"I shan't sleep on Saturday evening"

Ash Sutton



Jake Hill has been the master of qualifying so far this season



BMW man Hill will be going to his home circuit at Brands Hatch



one that Ingram is relishing. The 29-year-old says: "I am feeling really confident—not in a cocky way, or in a 'it's mine to lose' way. I am relaxed, comfortable and I am looking forwards. I am more excited than nervous, to be honest.

"Yes, there are some nerves and there is some anxiousness and anticipation. But I am excited, and I am not dreading the weekend arriving. I know it is going to be mega. I think we have got a good shot at it, I really do.

"I think this is just about my 39th year of going into the finals day in with a chance. I have been here before, but you could argue that I have never had such a good opportunity for the last couple of years. My last proper go at it was probably 2018. It feels good that I have been here before. I know what to expect. You know how the day is going to pan out and I know what is coming around the corner next—although I am going into this racing against Ash, who has been in this situation and come

out victorious, whereas I haven't yet. I am probably ahead of Jake in that regard, but maybe slightly behind Ash."

For Hill, this is a new situation. He has knocked on the door with his ability and speed for several seasons, but it is coming at him very fast. He is up against some very experienced campaigners for his first title showdown.

The Kent racer says: "I am confident. I am in a really good place at the moment with the team and with myself. I have been the best-scoring driver in the second part of the season and I just need to keep that up for one more round."

While the races themselves will be difficult to read, with so many variables that can play out over the course of the three events, the hardest yards of the weekend will be played out in the 30-minute qualifying session on Saturday.

Sutton, for one, knows that he will be keeping an eye on his rivals. "Qualifying could be the be-all and end-all of the weekend in my opinion," explains the Motorbase man. "If we can get up there near the front and be in the mix with our main rivals, that is going to be crucial. Realistically, it is all about being near the guys you are fighting with. If we are all 15th or so then that is still OK. The key thing is keeping the other title hopefuls in sight. That was the same mindset last time out at Silverstone: it didn't really matter where we were, so long as we were near the others."

Hill is leading the Goodyear Wingfoot award this year as he is the best qualifier this season and when it comes to the crunch point of Saturday, this is where he thinks he will score. "It is crucial," he says. "But I am on top of that. I have upped my game and that has been shown. I'm even beating Colin [Turkington] in that contest, so I know I am OK!"

For Hill, it is his local – and favourite track – so maybe he is in the box seat here. "Every one of us that is in the title fight are pretty good," he allows. "Whether it is my favourite track or not

makes no difference. Everyone is good."

The pressure on that Saturday afternoon performance is something that Ingram says has been there in the nine other meetings so far this season. "It has been important all year. It doesn't change," he says. "This year, you would argue that qualifying has been the most important part of the weekend, especially with no success ballast on the cars. I feel good in the knowledge that I have a little bit more hybrid than the others. We have got the upper hand there. I can see this bloody thing going down to the last lap of race three, I really can."

Hill also acknowledges that Saturday will be crucial. "This year, more than ever, it is a qualifying game," he says. "It is not like the old weight system."

The attention focused on each driver over the course of the two-day event is something that is hard to replicate, and therefore it is something that is hard to prepare for. The different approaches of the individuals are interesting to

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Sutton has been there before by prevailing on the BTCC finals day

observe. But is there a template?

"I treat it just the same as any other race weekend," says Sutton. "If that means mingling in with the guys and the girls in the garage or the fans or whoever, I just do what I usually do. I do whatever feels natural at the time. I try not to set things in place and over-think it.

"The only bit that is slightly more intense is the media attention and there is no way around that, that is just part of it. We do all the filming with Louise Goodman and ITV on the Friday. There is no point fighting it or getting wound up by it. You can't change it and you have to take it in your stride. Other than that, it is just another weekend, isn't it?"

For Ingram, is it about embracing the feeling of being in the spotlight. Being in with a shout of the crown is something he says brings the best out in him.

"Everyone has their own way of dealing with the pressure," he says. "But, personally, I quite enjoy the feeling of pressure. Everything is a little more focused and heightened. I am not going to be hiding away I am going to be exactly the same as I normally am, if not more open to chats with people and engaging with the fans. That is because I enjoy it, I like to do that. I am aware that I am in an immensely lucky position to be going into the championship final with a shot at winning it."

And managing the race weekend is key. While there are so many variables across any given race weekend, with three races, reversed grids and hybrid usage to take into account, it is devilishly difficult to come up with a pre-race weekend plan. That is what makes the showdown so intriguing.

Sutton knows as much: "I think if everyone pre-planned it, there would be an awful lot of people on pole position! But you just don't know what to expect. Even after free practice two nowadays, you still don't know what people are capable of. At Silverstone for example,



we were 23rd after FP2 and then we went and stuck it on the fourth row in qualifying. The whole championship has become so much more difficult to read, but you have to trust what you are doing, trust the team, the car and the process behind it all. Once qualifying is out of the way, you can start putting little bits of the jigsaw together but that will change lap in, lap out in the race because someone might have gained a place or lost a place. There are just so many variables."

Ingram will be in touch with the pitwall during the three encounters but he says that having an overload of information can, sometimes, play against a driver. "I like to know a little bit what the others are up to," says Ingram. "If you have to finish fifth or fourth, then obviously you want to be told. But, realistically, I can't control what anyone else is doing so it doesn't really matter. I just have to do the best job I can. I would like to be aware, though, and I would rather have too much information than not enough."

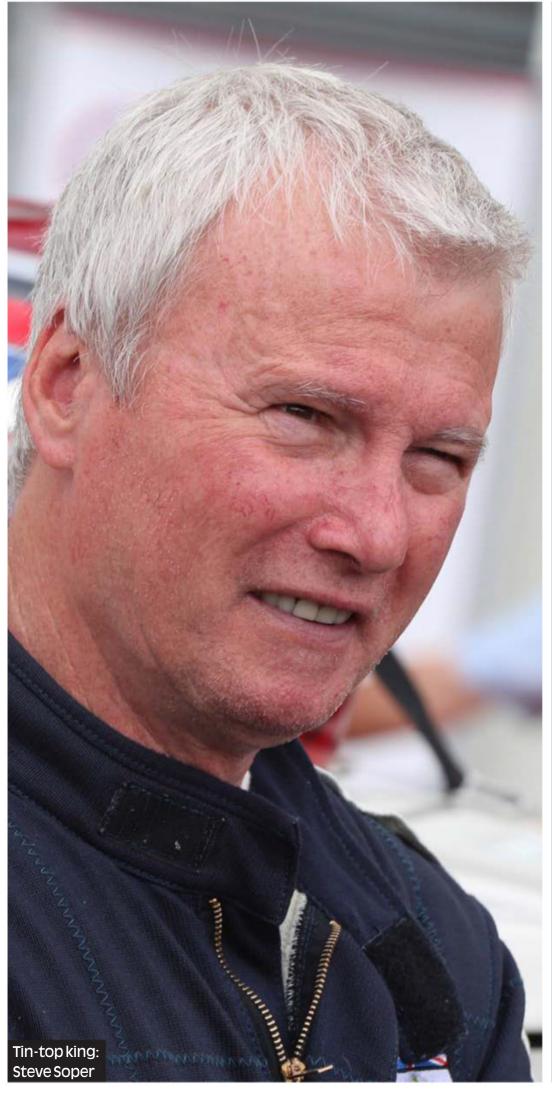


Ingram is going into the finale looking forward to the nervousness

FEATURE

STEVESSOPER: THE UNCROWNED BRITISH TOURING CAR SUPERSTAR

Matt James puts the readers' questions to the legend of saloon car racing across the globe who just missed out on a domestic tin-top crown



K, so maybe that headline is a bit unfair. Steve Soper did win the Japanese Touring Car Championship in 1995 for BMW but, for a man rated by his fellow drivers as one of tin-top racing's finest ever exponents, that barely scratches the surface of a fabulous career.

The Englishman worked his way through the one-make ranks before being picked up by the Austin Rover Group in the early 1980s. If not for a courtroom battle, he would have been the outright British Saloon Car title winner in 1983 in a Rover Vitesse, just his second year in the top-flight. As you can read, he still regards it as the one that got away.

What followed was a two-decade professional career at the forefront of tin-top racing around the globe, including a memorable stint in the British Touring Car Championship. And, now 30 years have elapsed and the dust has settled, Soper has an interesting take on who was responsible for *that* clash in the 1992 BTCC showdown between John Cleland and Tim Harvey, when Cleland and Soper ended up in the gravel at Luffield. Who, exactly, was to blame? Read on and find out more.

He signed off his career with prototype outings at Le Mans in the fearsome BMW V12 LM before a disastrous return to the BTCC in 2001 with Peugeot, when a crash ruled him out of racing for a decade. But, even at the age of 70, he is now back behind the wheel showing off his skills with numerous outings in historic racing.

Thanks to our readers for the questions and to Steve Soper for his generous time and expansive answers. We are thinking of getting him back again: there is so much more to ask, but this first slice is intriguing.

Question: Was it your father's influence that sparked your interest in motorsport, or do you think you would have found the passion anyway?

Russell Scobbie Via email

Steve Soper: "It was all to do with my father, I am sure. As a kid I was dragged along to rallies, races and autotests with either him competing or he and his friends were going there to watch. Dad's name was Harford Richmond Soper, but he was known as Joss. He had a small garage in Kenton [in London] which did minor repairs on cars and sold tyres, batteries and that sort of thing. So I was always around cars.

"Dad was an out-and-out enthusiast and did sprints and rallies. He never really did much circuit racing, unless there was a sprint around Brands Hatch or something like that. Dad was OK at competing, but he didn't start early. He had to wait until he had the finances to do it. He was married with two kids and that all had to be sorted first.

"Once I had got to about seven years old, I was going racing all the time and once I got to 10, I actually wanted to go because the bug had bitten me too. I started doing autotests with his licence when I was about 14 or 15 years old. The organisers knew, but they turned a blind eye to it. Dad would do a run and then I would take over the car and go and line up again as him!"

MN: Did you beat him?

SS: "I can't remember, but probably not. I didn't have much finesse at that point. For me, it was all about loads of revs and wheelspin! It was all bravado and no feeling."

MN: There is a bit of a journey from doing that to getting on to a race track and tackling the one-make series, which were the foundations of your early career... SS: "I started with a Ford Escort in 1971. It was a Mk1 which started off as a road car and I turned it into a race car. I turned up to an 8 Clubs race meeting at Silverstone. In my first race, I crashed on my first competitive lap at the first corner. I got to Copse and it fell over [rolled]. It was destroyed. When I got back home, I had the wreck on the back of the trailer and dad walked out, walked around it, didn't look at me and then just walked back inside. He muttered a four-letter swear word under his breath, and that was me admonished.

"I thought that was the end of my racing career. Financially, certainly, it was a setback. I had left school when I was 15 and I was still working for him at that time. I worked with him until I was about 20, but then I decided that I thought

"I used to be all wheelspin and some bravado"

Steve Soper

I knew better and struck out on my own. That's when I become a car dealer."

MN: So you weren't discouraged by your early racing experiences then?

SS: "When you are that age, you believe in your own ability and your own destiny. At that time, I didn't know if I could be competitive but I wanted to do it and it seemed fun. So I carried on."

MN sets the scene: Soper quickly became the benchmark in one-make saloon series, turning his hand to a variety of categories and lifting the Mini title in 1977 and the Mini 1275GT crown in 1979.

Question: How tough was the 1980 season – you contested the Ford Fiesta one-make series and raced in a Fiat X/19 in Mod Sports? How come you decided to do both?

Lee Mitchell Via email

SS: "Motorsport had just started not to cost me money because people were wanting me to drive their cars. The X/19 was a Radborne-built car for the Modified Sports Championship in 1979, and then we uprated the car and did the Donington GT series in 1980. I committed to that programme as it wasn't going to cost me a penny to drive, the car was good fun—it had been built by Dallara in Italy—and it was lovely. Then suddenly I also got offered to drive a Fiesta in the Ford one-make series. Again, someone came to me and asked me to do it.

"I said yes to the Fiestas provided anything I won, I kept. Back then, with all the one-make championships, they usually put up a road car as a prize at the end of the season for the champion. In my time, I had a free Mini, a free Fiesta and eventually a free Metro. This was funding my motor racing. I found I could win these one-make championships — not because I was a superstar driver, but I had the ability to get my car a bit better than the rest if it was a new championship."

MN: What do you put that skill down to?
Where did it come from?

SS: "I think there is a good feeling that I

have for a car. I can quickly identify what is wrong and that comes from having built cars. If you have built an engine and built a racing car, you have a far better understanding of what needs to be done to make it better. That is one of the reasons I would never have entered something like the Renault 5 championship that was around at the time. It had been running for five years and everyone else would have found the tricks and I would have been on catch up. If it was a brand-new series I found that I could make the package more competitive than the rest.

"Before I started getting offered drives,

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I could just about afford to do a one-make championship, but I couldn't afford to do things like the Special Saloons series, which I had dabbled in in the mid-1970s. It was just too much money." MN: It all came really good with two programmes in 1980. How did you manage to juggle them both? SS: "There were a couple of clashes and I didn't have enough nerve to tell either Radbourne or the Fiesta team about each other and I committed to both! I thought I would work out the problems as and when they came along. The only way I could do a couple of the clashes was by hiring a helicopter to go between tracks goodness knows how I afforded that at the time, but it all sounds very grand, doesn't it? At some of the others, I could drive between tracks – if it was Silverstone and Donington, for example."

Question: How important was the Metro Challenge to your career when you stepped into it in 1981? Did you realise at that point that you could become a professional?

Peter Shiers Via email

SS: "To the latter part of that question, no I certainly didn't know I could become a professional racing driver but the Metro Championship was the starting point. It was just about being in the right place at the right time. Because there were all these other championships around like the Ford Fiesta one, the Renault 5s, the Mini, when Austin Rover decided to do the Metro one, apart from just winning the road car, they wanted to prove to the world that this was the one-make championship to do so they then pushed me as the first champion and dangled a carrot with a bit of sponsorship and some money to enter the British

Saloon Car Championship in a Metro.

"I was pitched against Richard Longman in the Datapost-backed car. Winning the Metro one-make series certainly put me in the right place with a bit of money and a bit of help and it was that which really kick-started my career." MN: The Austin Rover Group [ARG] were very proactive at that time... **SS:** "I got on really well with the top brass there, people like John Foden and John Davenport – the only one I didn't really get along with was Tom Walkinshaw, but that comes a bit later on in the story. My deal was with the ARG concern not TWR. I was given to Tom and he had to accept that although he didn't particularly like it.

"My background then was that I was a motor trader, so I bought from the trade and sold to the trade. That made me quite streetwise. I had my ear to the ground and in the right places, so when I heard things that were going on I was able to react to them. Luckily, most of them came to fruition for me.

"The Hepolite sponsorship is an example. I had that sponsorship on my Metro Challenge car. I probably got around £500 for that. ARG endorsed the Hepolite sponsorship with the British Saloon Car deal in 1982 and I think I got £5000. By 1983, I was very well in with Hepolite and I had heard a conversation that they believed that the Datapost cars, which also had Esso and Hepolite on them as backers, looked like a Christmas tree. I worked out that they were going to take that money and move it away. They wanted to put it somewhere else in the British Saloon Car Championship so eventually I had an agreement with them that they would come with me and back me with whatever I wanted to do for about£120,000.



The first appearance in the British Saloon Car Championship came in a factory Mini Metro in 1982 season

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FEATURE

"There was still some pull from Austin Rover, who didn't really want me to poach them. Hepolite and I did look at running a BMW 635CSi—we looked at the numbers of running that programme just for me. Politically, with ARG in the background, it was safer for me to go with them and join TWR in an ARG-supported Rover Vitesse. That meant I wouldn't have to fight any politics and that is how I ended up where I did."

MN sets the scene: The fight for tin-top honours in the British Saloon Car Championship in 1983 was a tumultuous affair, with the title only being determined in a courtroom some six months after the final chequered flag had fallen. Despite claiming the title on track, Soper's Tom Walkinshaw Racing-run Rover was eventually stripped of the glory and Andy Rouse was awarded the title.

Question: Was the 1983 season the one that got away when you were disqualified after winning it? Do you look back with bitter memories?

Barry May Via email

SS: "In the short term, at the time, there was no bad feeling about it but maybe long term there is. I wouldn't say it is bitter, that is too strong a word, but it is certainly disappointing that I am not in the record books as a British champion and it is totally out of my control.

"The RAC scrutineer and particularly [rival driver] Frank Sytner were just out to get Tom at any cost and eventually the cost was an adjustable tappet on a hydraulic tappet system. There was no performance advantage it was just a maintenance shortcut, really. But it wasn't legal.

"At the time, I didn't care because I was charging about at 100mph in my life and just looking forwards in my career. But sitting here now, it would have been nice to have that accolade. There are a few that got away, but that smarts a little bit."

MN sets the scene: Soper had his first sportscar experience at Le Mans in 1983 in a Mazdaspeed 717C in the Group C Junior category, sharing with James Weaver and Jeff Allam. The wailing rotary-engined car was certainly distinctive...

Question: How did you get involved with Mazda's Le Mans programme in 1983? And, did you wear ear defenders inside the car?

Steven Nye Via email

SS: "That came through Tom Walkinshaw, he was involved with that deal and he had connections at Mazdaspeed. He asked if I wanted to do it. Up until then, it had always been on my bucket list of things I wanted to do. I had been there a couple of times with other drivers—people like Tiff Needell—as a helper.

"I was already wearing earplugs by that stage. I know it was loud because

"The BTCC got away, and that still smarts"

Steve Soper



we never got any flags waved at us – every time we went past the marshals, they always had their fingers in their ears!"

MN sets the scene: Soper went and plied his trade in Europe for three seasons in the European Touring Car Championship for Ford in 1986-1988 and in the World Touring Car Championship too in 1987. He was runner up in the ETCC in 1988. Question: After the TWR situation, you eventually joined the ace German Eggenberger team in the European Touring Car Championship in 1986: how did you join them? How did they know about you?

Ed Sleigh Via email

SS: "In 1983, BMW Germany sent Hans Stuck over to the UK to do some races in a BMW 635CSi. It was a Team GB car but supported highly by Germany. I beat him a few times and we had some great races between us.

"When Stuck went back to Germany, to justify that he had been beaten, he couldn't say that he had been beaten by a wanker, could he? So he told BMW that I was an up-and-coming superstar and they had kept an eye on me through that season. At the end of that 1983 season, they offered me a contract—I have still got that contract in my drawer at home.

"At the time I was on something like £5000 to race, and in 1983 while that

wasn't fantastic, it was OK. BMW offered me £30,000 and they said I would be able to race with either Schnizter or Eggenberger in Europe. That would be for them to decide if I took the contract. It was a one-year deal. I was desperate to go. As a kid I had watched the BMWs at the Tourist Trophy and things like that. My dream was right there. It was the ultimate for me.

"But I realised that it was still a big jump for me. I think I had raced at Spa and Zolder, but nowhere else abroad. I went back to ARG and told the boss John Davenport. ARG had wanted me to sign a new contract. I told him what BMW had offered me and he said they would match it and they would give me a two-year deal. They told me it would be wise for me to stay with a team I knew and that I would be with my friends. As a youngster, I was still getting to grips with the politics and how things worked, and it really was easier to stay with ARG. I had suddenly trebled my wages and had some stability with a two-year contract.

"The BMW deal was there and I would have had a lot to learn and, at that stage, you never really know how good you are and it is hard to get the confidence. It is even true today: you never know how good you are. There is always someone out there who is going to be better than you or faster than you. So that BMW deal just felt like a risk to me an so I stayed with ARG.

"In 1984 and 1985 I did European touring cars with ARG, so I ended up doing the championship that BMW had offered me anyway. But I was doing it with all my mates. It just seemed easier. Looking back, I shouldn't have done it. I should have taken that BMW chance, but I didn't."

MN: And so how did the Eggenberger deal happen eventually then?
SS: "Those seasons in 1984 and 1985 weren't happy years for me. I was still carving away in my career but I was being controlled by Tom Walkinshaw and I didn't really understand the politics. I got dragged down to Tom's office a few times when I might have said a few things wrong and he just humiliated me."
MN: So you never really got on with him then?

SS: "No, I never got on with him. He didn't like me and I didn't like him. I think he accepted me as a driver but I wasn't one of his chosen special ones like Peter Lovett, Win Percy or Jeff Allam. Along came people like Armin Hahne, Marc Duez and Jean-Louis Schlesser too, and they all worked their way into Tom's good books. Suddenly I was just one of a gang of drivers. I was still trying to promote myself and become the star in that group and it wasn't really working for me.

"At the end of 1985, I knew that I had to get out of there. I told ARG that as soon

as I could terminate my contract, I would be off. I didn't have anywhere to go, but it was important for me to tell them, rather than them telling me it was over.

"Once I had done that, I immediately made contact with BMW. The negotiations started off at the end of 1985 quite well and then, all of a sudden over Christmas, it went dead—well, I suppose everyone was on holiday! Even into early January, nobody would return my calls. Then, out of nowhere, Ford Germany rang me and asked if I would be interested in driving for them in the ETCC in 1986. They explained that the Sierra Cosworth was coming in 1987 and they asked if I wanted to be part of the programme. I thought that the BMW thing was not going to happen and so I jumped at that.

"At the time, I was probably thinking longer term and knew that the Sierra was going to be the homologation special to be in. I said yes, but suddenly there was a stumbling block in that Stuart Turner at Ford UK didn't want me as part of that team. He was all over the European side of things and he was the budget behind the Ford Sierra RS Cosworth and RS500.

"He decided he didn't want me because of some of the things I had said and done at ARG a few years before. There was a promotional video made by ARG and I was encouraged, on screen, to be the spoilt brat in that movie and they were telling me to say this and say that, and



Joining Eggenberger in 1986 was the start of the Sierra journey...



...that ultimately ended with the Iconic Ford Sierra RS500

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all I ended up doing was mugging myself because that image stuck with me, even though it had been falsified by the directors. Then one of the journalists in Motor wrote about that movie and said that I was basically a little shit.

"Turner had obviously seen this. I phoned Ford UK and asked for a meeting with Stuart, which was very difficult to get because he clearly knew what it was about and he had already decided I was a no-no. Eventually I got the meeting and I explained that everything he had seen and read was not me. I explained the movie and how it had been hammed up, and I told him to give me the chance and I would do a good job. In the end, he changed his mind.

"I hadn't met Rudi Eggenberger until I went to the factory at the start of 1986. After TWR, it was a breath of fresh air, even though Eggenberger wasn't easy to work with as a team boss. It was all about his cars. Although there was a team there, he was across all aspects of it. He leant over everyone as they did up every bolt. He built the engines, he dynoed the engines, he did the cylinder heads, he did everything in there. It was a Swiss-watch precision workshop. They had a boxer dog in the factory and in the winter, when it went out, they would wipe it feet before it came back into the place...

"With Rudi, if you abused his cars – or heaven forbid scratched one of his cars – you knew about it. You were

"All any driver wants is the biggest power"

Steve Soper

dressed down."

Question: The BMW M3 versus the Ford Sierra RS500: what was your preference? **Chris Phillips** Via email

SS: "The Sierra. Any racing driver, all they want is horsepower and that had the most on offer at the time. The BMW had 280bhp, maybe, but at the time the Fords had north of 500bhp. Which car handled better? The BMW. Which manufacturer did I prefer driving with? BMW. Car for car, though, and if you went to a race track and had the choice of the two, you would choose the RS500."

MN: What was the key to getting a good lap time out of an RS500?

SS: "You had to be fairly neat. It is like any racing car: if you are in a big oversteer moment, you aren't actually going forwards, you are just going sideways. With everything I have ever driven, be that front-wheel drive, a one-make series car or anything, even a Le Mans Prototype, I drive exactly the same every car. Some you might brake later, but where I open the throttle, which is hopefully before the apex, then it should be the same in any car.'

MN: Did you know at the time that the Ford Sierra RS500 would go on to become such an iconic car?

SS: "I certainly didn't know what it would end up being, but I knew it would win everything in 1987 and 1988. Ford had done such an amazing job. When they started the programme, it was back in 1985. That is when the engine and suspension development started. It wasn't like a Rover Vitesse which was a road car with some racing bits brought on to it. It was a full-blown homologation special. All I was interested in at the time was what could help me win."

Ouestion: Please can you ask Steve what his memories of racing against Nigel Mansell in a touring car were? Did he rate Mansell? Adrian King

SS: "The first few races that Mansell did, he wasn't competitive, which is fine. That's because he wasn't a saloon car expert and he didn't come from that background. If you look at history, some saloon car drivers can go forward and drive a single-seater, but it is very few. There is an even smaller percentage of single-seater drivers who can jump into a touring car and immediately be competitive. You can't knock Nigel Mansell for what he achieved in Formula 1, IndyCar and whatever else. He has ticked off all of those boxes.

"In his first few appearances in a touring car, I don't think he gelled with it and worked out how to get a lap time out of it. But, eventually, he did. When he did his races in 1998 in the Mondeo – particularly at Donington – he got it together.

"The problem is, for someone like Nigel coming into the BTCC is that every single other driver out there – and back in the 1990s, we were all employed to drive: the likes of Gabriele Tarquini, Rickard Rydell, myself and John Cleland, etc, we were all out there being paid by a manufacturer to do a job. So as soon as Nigel turned up, people didn't just want to beat him, but the temptation was for everyone else to prove they were just as big a superstar in their own world. If they wouldn't have given their rivals an inch on the race track, then they wouldn't give Mansell even a centimetre.

"It was a brave move for Nigel to do it and I think he probably thought he could achieve it more quickly than he did. But he was always going to be on a hiding to nothing because of who he was and what he had already achieved in the sport."

Question: John Cleland said about you after the controversial end to the 1992 BTCC that "the man's an animal". What animal does Steve think he was referring to?

Lee Foxon

Via email

SS: "Now there is a good question, one that I have not been asked before! I have not thought about that.



Best of rivals: Klaus Ludwig (I) and his team-mate Steve Soper (r)

"At the time, John and I stopped talking for six months. We went back to being good mates after those six months and even a few weeks ago, he wished me a happy birthday. We still talk and have good conversations. John has helped on a couple of business deals I have done, and I regard him as a good long-standing friend.

"At the time of the Silverstone incident, he was wound up and it was his championship and I am sure that if it was my championship and I had been involved in a shunt with someone I would have said something horrible as well. I have never analysed what he said. I obviously know what he said: I have got a load of Scottish friends and they still bring it up to this day. When we go out for dinner I still get called 'animal' as a joke. The Franchitti brothers are the worst, Dario and Marino."

MN: It is 30 years on: is anyone prepared to accept blame for that shunt yet? **SS:** "I don't know. I think I was probably more to blame than John, but he did play a part. If you really want to apportion blame, I will accept 55%, but he has to accept 45%...

"My point is that I was wiped out on the first lap by David Leslie – Vauxhall – at the Vale and I had a badly damaged car, I drove from the back to up to John without hitting anyone, despite however many I had overtaken. It was all clean about in 20 cars to get to Cleland. I got ahead of John and I passed him and, in one of the best moves I have done in motor racing, I manipulated the situation so that [Cleland's title rival and Soper's team-mate] Tim Harvey could get ahead of us both.

continued on page 24

FEATURE





Soper became accustomed to wearing the BMW colours with pride



Soper enjoyed the BMW M3 during his time in the DTM, here in 1992

"I then had Harvey in a championshipwinning position and I was then riding shotgun for Tim. Job done, and I hadn't touched another car. At the very next corner John chucked it up the inside and if I hadn't been there for him to bounce off, I am sure his car would have fallen over [rolled]. I probably thought that Vauxhall, with what had happened with Leslie earlier on and then Cleland, were being too rough on me. I went for the move into the next corner and there wasn't any compromise in what I was doing. But you have to also take into account that the last time John saw me after he had barrelled down the inside, he thought he had eliminated me. It pushed me off track, and he didn't think I was still there – and John also lost his door mirror in the contact.

"He didn't know where I was and he turned in – and I respect John as a driver, he is no fool – as if it was his corner. He wasn't aware that I was still alongside him. If he had known I was there, I guarantee he would have given me the room we both needed to make that turn, but he believed I was gone. He took an uncompromising line into that corner, and I was there still slightly wound up.

"If I had wanted to wipe him out for the sake of BMW and Tim Harvey, I could have done it in a far easier way and made it look like an accidental move and still finished the race myself. Blame? To be fair to John, I am probably slightly more to blame than him, but there are too many circumstances that feed into it than just the collision at Luffield on its own."

Question: What was the motivation for returning to the British Touring Car Championship with Peugeot in 2001? Do you have any regrets about it? Garry Hobson Via Facebook

SS: "I do have a few regrets. I had retired and stopped and I had bought a BMW dealership in Lincoln. I stress I bought it and it wasn't handed to me by BMW. It was a struggling dealership and it was losing money and I knew that when

I bought it—that is why I could afford to buy it.

"I retired in 2000. Then Peugeot came on the phone. The boss Mick Linford asked me if I wanted to do the BTCC. I said no. But he was quite persistent and by the end of 2000, I was struggling with the dealership. But with this Peugeot deal I could take a salary – a good salary – from that and not from my own business. I couldn't really afford to pay myself a wage from the dealership because it was in dire trouble and I hadn't sorted it yet.

"Peugeot said I didn't need to do any testing, any PR work. All I needed to do was turn up on a race weekend on the Saturday and leave on the Sunday night. They kept upping the money and upping the money. I kept saying no because I wanted my last deal to have been with BMW. At the end of the day the offer got too great and I said yes.

"So that was the positive, but the negative was that the car wasn't quick. With its configuration, it was never going to win. We tried very hard to get the thing competitive, and we just couldn't. Then the nail in the coffin was a shunt at the final round at Brands Hatch, which put me out of racing for 12 years..."

MN: That was on the run into Graham Hill Bend, wasn't it? Weren't you told not to race again?

SS: "It was a really violent shunt and hit my head on the rollcage and I lost consciousness for about a minute. When I came to, I was dragged off to the medical centre. I was sat there a little bit dazed and I had lost part of my memory. Only just a little bit. I was fine, but I couldn't remember that I had just had a birthday or what year it was, but I did know who I was and where I was. It was just silly little things. They looked at me and told me I had concussion and not to drive home. They asked who was there with me and I told them my wife Louise was and she could take me back. They said they were going to bring her in to the medical centre with me and explain things to her. At that point, I thought it would be a great idea to play a little joke.

I don't know why. I thought it would be a prank that when they brought her into the room, I said 'that's not my wife: my wife is blonde and taller...'. I said all this and I thought it was hilarious. This didn't go down too well. I ended up driving home — mostly in silence...

"I got home without an accident and I was due in Lincoln the next day, so I drove there. I had the meeting and went to this little flat I had up there and went to bed for the night. On Tuesday morning, I couldn't get out of bed. I had vertigo. Louise drove up to pick me up and took me home, and I went back to bed. My doctor said I would be fine but a week later, I went for a brain scan and it showed that the shock was down to bruising on the brain. But the scan also picked up some dislodged vertebrae. It was quite serious as it was near with spinal cord and that is when they told me there would be no more racing.

"I had already agreed to race at Macau for Peugeot. While I was contemplating getting a second opinion, I went and did Macau, which wasn't probably the smartest move. Then I got back and went to two more doctors and they all said the same. That put the brakes on me.

"A few years after that, my left arm suddenly went numb and all my fingers. I had pins and needles. I went back to the consultant and he said I needed an operation immediately. The vertebrae had moved and they decided they needed to operate and they replaced two vertebrae with some titanium and some carbon cages, and the operation was a success. From the moment I woke up, I felt great and the doctors said after three months I could get back to doing what I wanted to do: hence I am now racing historic cars."

MN sets the scene: In 1997, Soper followed employer BMW into the GT world in the FIA GT Championship in a McLaren, but he knew there was an even bigger challenge on the horizon... Question: I have read that you loved the McLaren F1 GTR. Do you wish you had

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got into sportscars earlier? Chris Phillips Via Facebook

SS: "I loved the McLaren. At the time it was a great car to race, and be involved with McLaren and Gordon Murray and all that came with it.

"Whatever you do, you need people and a team and everything around you. In 1985, I got a call from Tom Walkinshaw when I was still at TWR driving tin-tops. I had a chat with Tom but, in his soft and very broad Scottish accent, I couldn't really understand what I was talking to him about and what I had agreed to during that conversation. I thought it was a race somewhere, so I said yes.

"I rang up the next day and I spoke to his secretary and asked if she knew what it was about. During the day, she diplomatically asked around and found out what it was. It turned out it was a drive in the Jaguar XJR-6 Group C car at Fuji! He was minus a driver and he wanted me to go and I had said yes. Even if I had have understood him on the phone call, I probably would have said yes anyway, so that was OK!

"Before qualifying, I got three laps in the car. I had never driven at Fuji or driven a ground-effect car before, and I was out of my depth. I was slow as hell, and I couldn't do what they were asking: they would tell me a particular corner was flat, and I had been braking and changing

"I was told that I would not be able to race again"

Steve Soper

down because I just didn't understand aero cars at all. If I was the number one driver or if I had done two days' testing beforehand, I would have been OK. Luckily, the race never really got going for us because there was a monsoon.

"But that introduction, plus the fact I hadn't enjoyed Le Mans when I had done it in 1983 because it scared me, I just knew that it wasn't my forte and I realised I should just stick with the touring cars." MN: You shunned long-distance racing then?

SS: "Well, for the next 10 years, every offer I had to do Le Mans or sportscars, I said no. Then BMW knew I wasn't keen on Le Mans especially but they told me that they were going to do a programme at La Sarthe and they were going to keep on doing it until they won it. Did I want to be part of it or not? That was tricky. I knew I didn't like the race but, in my mind, there are three big races in the world: the Monaco Grand Prix, the Indy 500 and Le Mans, and this would be the only shot I would get at one of those. If BMW say they are going to do it till they win it, I knew I wanted to be part of that programme.

"It was also the fact that I would then be driving with people that I knew and with people who knew me well too. If I needed more time or more learning, I would get it, and I could run a proper test programme. "When the Schnitzer-run 1996 shorttail McLaren F1 GTR came along, that was almost like a road car. If it had downforce, I didn't really notice. It was like driving a 600bhp touring car with the engine in the back. I loved it. I was fast.

"Then, having got into it and used to it, the long-tail came along which was faster and with more downforce, but it was like going from a Class B touring car to a Class A one. I was that much more familiar with everything. It was all getting quicker, but it was the same type of car. When we started racing it in the FIA series in 1997, we started doing proper testing and that is where the last bit of speed came from for me. In the quick corners I was fine against all the other factory BMW drivers but against my team-mate [and co-driver], JJ Lehto, I was slow.

"Of course, it was in JJ's interest to get me up to speed and he just taught me and talked me through it, particularly at this outing at Paul Ricard. He gave me the confidence. I could see what he was doing at Signes, the really fast corner at the end of the straight. It took me four or five laps but I was able to do what he was doing. I had changed my driving style to cope with it and my outlook to doing it.

"That car used to have similar braking performance to a Formula 1 car. You could go in way past the 200-metre board. It was probably 120m before you would think about braking. I couldn't



do that to start with. JJ told me that, at the 120m board, you hit the brakes as hard and as fast as you can because the car will be stable with the aero. It will not skitter about.

"The trickiest point was to come off the brakes slightly as you head to the turn because you can't have the same amount of brake pressure with less aero load on the car.

"But again, if someone tells you what they are doing and you can see it on the data, it should be easy to learn to do it yourself. Eventually, you do it.

"All of that testing and having a team that sits with you really helps. It is the treatment I had never had with the Jaguar at Fuji in 1985."

MN: And the BMW V12 LM prototype: that was another step forward again for you?

SS: "But after my experience in the longtail McLaren, it came fairly easy. The 1998 LMP, the first Williams-built one, wasn't a great car.

"But I was evolving and then the car did too. When we got to the 1999 car, Tom Kristensen and I had done more than 4000kms of testing and it was like a pair of shoes.

"I knew everything it was doing. I was properly into that mindset and my touring car days were behind me. I thought I was still driving it the same as a touring car but in a sportscar, when you look back, it is more refined, In a tin-top, everyone wants to nick a bit of kerb here or there - be that a slow corner or a fast corner. But the sportscars didn't like kerbs and it upset the areo." MN: Would you say the 1999 BMW V12LM, which you raced in the USA, was the best car you've raced? SS: "Without a doubt. I still drive it in some demonstration runs to this day. I have driven at the Festival of Speed, for example. I still get that same rush when I get in it and start it up, even on

Question: I would like to know which driver Steve enjoyed racing against the

a demo.'

most? Who was his fiercest rival? Wes Hooker Via Twitter

Back at the wheel:

Soper loves historics

SS: "Well, if it is your fiercest rival, you probably don't like them very much! Probably [Eggenberger teammate] Klaus Ludwig was the toughest. We were in the same team but we were competitors, but he was very difficult to beat. And that is not just because he was a great driver, which he was, but he knew all the tricks. Politically he was very savvy.

"When we were doing the European Touring Car Championship, most of the races were around Germany so he knew all of the tracks, he knew all the people, he knew all the tricks andhe could communicate with Rudi Eggenberger in the same language, whereas I couldn't. He was hard to beat, but I did beat him. It was just very very difficult.

"One of the others I respect highly was Yvan Muller. Just look what he can do: rallying, ice racing, tin-tops, all sorts. He is a special talent. He ticks a lot of boxes."

Question: What do you think was your greatest achievement in motorsport? Damien Doherty Via email

SS: "I think being employed for over 20 years by car manufacturers to drive their products without a single break.

"Once my career started, it was always with manufacturers. I was never looking for sponsorship for a season or anything like that. I always followed what was offered. Around 1980, I was offered a Formula Ford F2000 deal – I can't remember who it was with – but the deal was that they wanted me to bring half of the budget.

"I could have turned right in my career and gone off and try to make it in single-seaters, or I could turn left and continue with the one-make tin-top deal I had and continue to make money. All I did was follow the chances which were open, rather than try and break down new doors."



A deal with Peugeot in 2001 was financially rewarding, if nothing else



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FEATURE

n March this year Marcus Short, having just turned 17 years old, was getting into a Rover 216 GTi in MG Cup on Brands Hatch's Indy circuit for his first-ever solo car race.

Before the end of July, he was racing on Silverstone's Grand Prix circuit in a GB4 single-seater, for the Hillspeed team.

Marcus is the son of Rollcentre's frontrunning Le Mans driver and team boss Martin, and Marcus's only real-life racing prior to Brands was sharing a Citroen C1 with Martin and older brother Morgan in Silverstone's C1 Challenge 24-hour race the previous year.

Yet this is not the usual tale of having a rich parent, nor of extensive karting experience. Marcus indeed has never done a kart race. Instead Marcus's—and Morgan's—long-time experience is in sim racing, which Marcus started at the age of three. Martin reckons he's only ever spent £3000 on sim racing for his sons. That wouldn't go very far in karting...

And at Brands Marcus showed his ability at the real thing, albeit not quite right away. Martin tells Motorsport News: "[At] Brands we didn't test, me saving money; he hadn't driven the Rover before. We had no idea what was going to happen; we didn't have any high expectations at all.

"And in qualifying he was Driving Miss Daisy and I was 'oh this isn't going well'. Then he gets in the race and it's like somebody's put him into turbo boost. He fluffed the start, he was dead last—and he just starts overtaking everybody around the outside, and I was going 'what's going on?""

Come the next MG Cup round, at Cadwell Park, more were asking this question. "Then we all realised that something's really kicking off," Martin notes.

Marcus qualified third overall, just off the front row, despite his 216 being in the slowest class of three. A rival even protested him "to seek an understanding why a car in Class A can achieve a performance at or above those of substantially enhanced performance in Classes B and C."

Marcus didn't start 2022 with a grand plan either; he expected Brands to be his only MG Cup round indeed. But he did well, and they decided to do another meeting. Then another. "It was all just winging it," Marcus admits to MN.

He won both Cadwell races in class, then won twice again at the following Silverstone double header. He also did two races alongside Morgan in his dad's Mosler sportscar in Classic Sports Car Club's Slicks Series. He won those too.

So what does the sim give him? "The biggest thing going into real life [is] you instantly know exactly where you're going, what lines you're taking, where you're braking," Marcus explains.

"And when you're actually racing you know how to position your car, what spatial awareness that you need. At Brands I was finding it easy to battle cars side by side round all sorts of corners just because I had that awareness from driving



Halfa year on Marcus was in GB4

SIM TO SINGLE-SEATER IN UNDER SIX MONTHS

In March he did his first solo car race; in July he raced in GB4. And it owes much to sim racing as Graham Keilloh discovers



Marcus (I) and Morgan found the sim prepared them for the real thing

round on the sims for years."

Martin adds: "That's what was really shocking, his racecraft at Brands was incredible, better than I've ever done. [It] was just jaw-dropping and that's because he's had 13 years of driving sims and realising what it took me maybe five years in a race car to get to. He just needed to translate his bum because everything they do on the sim is visual."

The sims' benefits don't end there.

"I lost probably three championships by insisting I had to win every race, I'm not thinking clearly enough to know when to accept my fate," Martin recalls.

"I'd sit behind them [Morgan and Marcus on the sim] with a glass of wine, and then I remember distinctly there was one point where [with] Marcus somebody taps him and he's got his hands off the wheel going 'what the... are you doing?' And then he loses time and he's going backwards. And I said that guy can't see



Marcus wowed at Cadwell in 216

your hands in the air, he doesn't care, all he knows is that he's pulling away from you because you're having a little paddy.

"And so then over the next couple of years both of them just became flat line, emotionless, and it was startling the difference that having no emotion made, they turned into like little Kimi Raikkonens.

"[Sim racing] trains your mind to deal with difficult situations logically and I'm sure that the more professional teams will build in errors in the car [on the sim], [saying] deal with this situation."

The GB4 opportunity came when Hillspeed boss Richard Ollerenshaw spotted proud dad Martin posting on Facebook about his sons' racing successes, and suggested one could have a run in a GB4 car. After Martin had been reassured on the cost, Marcus was chosen to race at Silverstone. Partly as Morgan had done Spa's CSCC round – Marcus was doing his mock A levels – but also Marcus was the one with love for single-seaters.

"We're racing against clubmen," Martin explains, "so going into GB4 was a great opportunity to reference him and see 'right, where are you?""

Yet Marcus at Silverstone had plenty to overcome. The single-seater was distinct from anything he'd driven (as noted he had no kart race experience). He was up against drivers who'd been competing all year, indeed had competed at Silverstone



hillspeed

Marcus first started sim racing young: here he is at the age of three

already in 2022. Tyre warm up proved a particular conundrum (see sidebar).

But as Morgan notes: "[I] was about a second from the top guys, about 0.7 from my team-mates, on a two-minute lap. And my times were pretty similar to what most were doing when they were there before [for their own first visit]." He got a fifth place, an eighth and a ninth.

It all revealed another sim benefit too.

"After the race Morgan and Marcus they set up an F4 car on the rig again," Martin notes, "and interestingly where Marcus needed to pick up pace [in real life], at Copse at Silverstone, Morgan was quicker than him. The sim reflected what was happening in real life which I was also pretty shocked at."

So what of the future? "I would like to get both the lads into a mainstream championship, again to see where they are," Martin says.

"As parents we've both retired and we unfortunately are cursed with the knowledge of how expensive motorsport is and how difficult it is to reach the top.

"So for me what I'm trying to do is particularly with the Mosler and the GB4 experience is put the boys into some kind of shop window where somebody might go those kids are driving 600 horsepower cars and they're doing a good job and maybe I need them on the road with me. Single-seaters would be very difficult but in GT racing there is a chance."

The heat is on

Marcus (in car) and Martin got GB4 go

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Dickon Siddall

Marcus Short had plenty to learn on his GB4 debut. And the biggest hurdle was warming the single-seater's tyres. His dad Martin explains: "To emphasise how green he was, it was taking him 20 minutes to get the tyres into the heat window and the qualifying session was only 15 minutes long. And every session I was going 'right he's going to do it I the warm upl, he's going to do it, nope, he's not done it'.

"So before qualifying, I've got a little Toyota Yaris GR, I took him out of the circuit in that and I said 'this is how you warm the tyres up'. And we hurtled up the road with me weaving violently from side to side, accelerating and braking, accelerating and braking.

"Richard Ollerenshaw's IHillspeed boss! wet himself when I told him about it because he imagines Marcus banging one side of the car to the other, which is what we were doing. And with that he went out and did it."

Marcus adds: "My team-mates were telling me they didn't find how to work the tyres until about three rounds in, but once you find it Ithe window! then you know how to do it. But it's so tricky to find that perfect slot, and I just didn't have enough time."

MN POLL WITH MOTUL





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THE MEN FOR THE BIGGEST OCCASION OF THE SEASON

Matt James launches the MN poll to find the favourite Formula Ford Festival winners

Photos: Motorsport Images

he annual Formula Ford showpiece, the Festival, is rapidly approaching and it has got us thinking about some of the big names who have scooped the silverware in the knock-out style, winnertakes-all showpiece.

This year's event takes place at Brands Hatch on October 22-23. While the Festival doesn't attract the numbers it used to, it is still a major accolade in the national racing calendar and there have been some truly epic finals and notable winners since it first took place some 50 years ago.

We've narrowed down a shortlist and need you to help us pick out the ones who have warmed the heart the most. Simply follow the instructions in the box-out on this page and make your voice heard.

THE NOMINEES

1 Tommy Byrne Year: 1981 Car: Van Diemen

RF81

While Tommy Byrne was already in slick-and-wings at the time, Van Diemen

boss Ralph Firman had been let down by lead driver Ayrton Senna, who had 'retired' back to Brazil. Ralph phoned his former works driver Byrne and invited him back into

the fold to go and win the Festival. The Irishman delivered and it was another staging post on his burgeoning career (at that point).



TO VOTE

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Find your favourite and vote



2 Johnny Herbert

Year: 1985 Car: Quest FF85 Johnny Herbert had been

knocking hard on the door in Formula Ford in 1985 in the unfancied Quest chassis. although he had not won a British

championship round through the year. It looked unlikely that he would win the Festival too when he crashed in practice and had to start from the back of his heat with a 10s penalty. No bother, the Essex ace powered through to win.



3 Eddie **Irvine**

Year: 1987

Car: Van Diemen RF87 Rising Northern Irish star Eddie Irvine had notalotofcash but a lot of ability and determination, which led Van Diemen boss Ralph Firman to partfund his Formula Ford season in 1987. Irvine scooped the UK crown with eight wins and took full advantage in a wetbut-drying Festival final in October to do the double.

4 Vincenzo Sospiri

Year: 1988

Car: Van Diemen RF88

After fluffing his start in the final, charismatic Italian Vincenzo Sospiri, in his John Village Automotive-run Van Diemen,

eventually selected first gear but he had already been swamped. However, his comeback drive was the stuff of legend and he diced mightily with his rivals to return to top spot. It was one of the best finals ever.



5 Dave Coyne

Year: 1990 **Car: Swift FB90**

Formula Ford's Mr Marmite, Dave Coyne, finally landed the big one in 1990 when he claimed the grandest prize of all. Having overcome a mid-event penalty, the 10-year veteran of Formula Ford racing staved offall of the upand-comers, including the late Fionn Murray and Jean-Christophe Boullion to take Swift's only Festival triumph.



6 Mark Webber

Year: 1996

Car: Van Diemen RF96

New South Wales driver Mark Webber had a torrid British Formula Ford Championship campaign and was beaten to the crown by Van Diemen team-mate Kristian Kolby. So the Festival was time to set things right, and he tamed the miserable conditions at Brands to put the record straight and begin his career trajectory.

7 Jenson Button

Year: 1998

Car: Mygale SJ98

This was a slugfest. The Van Diemen twins of Dan Wheldon and Marcos Ambrose took the fight to Jenson Button in his Haywood Racing machine and ganged up to try and shut him out of success. Wheldon was leading, but backing up Button into third-placed Ambrose proved folly, because Button prevailed in the three-way skirmish to underline his future potential.



8 Anthony Davidson

Year: 2000

Car: Mygale SJ00

Although beaten to the British title by James Courtney's works Van Diemen, Anthony Davidson produced the drive of his career (up to that point) to fend off a train of cars including Courtney, Robert Dahlgren and Mark Taylor to bring his car - which had suffered damage in the constant attacks from behind - to the flag in first position.



9 Joey Foster

Year: 2003

Car: Van Diemen RF03

It had been a year of slim pickings for Joey Foster in his Continental Racingrun Van Diemen in terms of race wins, but the Cornish flier used his nous and consistency to finish second in the standings. There was only one more thing to tick off, and he took the fight to the works cars at Brands Hatch and pulled off a fairy tale win with an inch-perfect defence from the jostling pack behind.



10 Nick Tandy

Year: 2007

Talk about controversy: this was a bout of the heavyweights, Callum Macleod (Jamun Reing Services Mygale) and Nick Tandy (JTR Ray GR07) and there was no love lost between the pair. Contact in the final on lap two showed that tempers were being frayed. A further clash (under the safety car...) led to on-the-road winner Macleod eventually being penalised and Tandy handed the victory. It was certainly memorable.

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FOR BRITISH

Trackrod win wraps

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he arrival of the R5 specification cars, along with the latest Rally2 machines, has made getting into the top league of national rallying easier than ever and the entry list of any significant event is dominated by these purpose-built four-wheel-drive rally cars.

Doncaster-based Matthew Hirst, 26, had shown excellent pace, notably in a Mitsubishi Lancer E9, but in order to chase overall glory in the Welsh National Championship and BTRDA Rally Series he needed something quicker.

The Ford Fiesta R5 previously campaigned by Callum Black was a smart choice and the results have just got better and better. The Welsh title was always the prime target for 2022 and that's looking good with two rallies to run, while a top-three BTRDA slot would wrap up an impressive debut season at this level.

Like so many, Hirst followed his father into the sport. He explained: "Me and my dad Garry just loved rallying. He competed but had to stop rallying in the 1980s due to children and business. Then he decided to get back into rallying and did some single-venues in the early 2000s, starting with a Sapphire Cosworth and then an Escort Cosworth. Eventually he got a Mitsubishi Lancer E9 and I had my

"Learning from Matt Edwards was vital"

Matthew Hirst



Hirst's maiden successes came in the Welsh National competition

eyes set on it as on as I was old enough to drive. As soon as I did my first event, he did his last event!"

Before his rallying debut, the teenaged Hirst Jr did about five years in national level karting and finished third in a national championship. But his height was an issue and the lure of rallying got stronger in stronger. He started in 2016 and has now been rallying for seven years. "I always wanted to go rallying more than racing," he said.

"I had two Lancer E9s through my time. The first one was more basic and we started out doing some single-venue stuff, and then got into the woods. We just built up as you do. It's not a good strategy to go into the woods and go flat-



He took third on the Trackrod

out straightaway. You're not going to last long doing it that way."

The results in the Mitsubishi were excellent but to move further up the overall pecking order, an R5-spec car was the obvious next move but it was still a big step.

"Massive," he says of the leap forward.
"I don't think I really appreciated how much of a challenge it was going to be until I first drove one. Afterwards I really needed to sit down and have a good think about how technical it is to drive a left-hand-drive car and something so capable."

In truth, it didn't start too well as he went off on the Riponian in early February. "The first time I drove it was a big wake-up call," he recalls. "I crashed on the first stage and I thought this is an expensive car to be crashing. There were a few things we didn't get right. I wasn't sat in the right place originally. Seat position in the car is a massive thing."

The key turning point was a day's coaching with reigning British Rally champion Matt Edwards. "That's really what changed the season for me. I'd recommend anybody to do a day with Matt. He can teach you all sorts of stuff that would take years



Hirst's progress has shone throughout his 2022 rally outings

to learn yourself," adds the student.
The confidence boost was apparent on Rally North Wales, which he won convincingly to start a winning

sequence. "We were first four-wheel drive on the road. We'd have been happy to finish in the top three but we won it. And from there, we've not really leaded hask "he says

looked back," he says.

ABTRDA win on the Rallynuts and another Welsh win on the Plains showed just how good his pace was, but Hirst rates BTRDA victory on the Nicky Grist as his best result to date. "Winning BTRDA on the Nicky Grist was a huge deal," he says. "To win the Rallynuts, which was also BTRDA, was great but there was something special about the Nicky Grist. I think that that was my sixth time doing it. I'd always wanted to go well there and it finally clicked."

They missed the Kielder Forest Rally while co-driver Declan Dear was busy getting married and on the earlier Border Counties Rally the Fiesta was hobbled by transmission problems. Damage to the rear suspension put them out of the Woodpecker but they were back on track with third place on the Trackrod.

The BTRDA crown is now won by Elliot Payne, but a good run on the

Cambrian could yet earn Hirst the runner-up slot. Before that, he has a good chance of sealing the Welsh crown on the Wyedean on October 15, an event he won overall in the Mitsubishi the last time it ran in 2019.

"I wouldn't be disappointed if we were to finish second to Elliot Payne in BTRDA," says Hirst. "We started out at the beginning of this year just trying to learn the car and looking at doing well in the Welsh as a first priority."

So, what comes next? He explains: "I'd love to get on Tarmac. If I ever do the British Rally Championship, which is a big if, then I think it'd be silly to do it without doing any Tarmac beforehand. So that's a possibility. But we've got enough to think about this year, first."

Away from rallying, the family business is in motor salvage and he is engaged to Ellie Grace. His other regular partner is co-driver Declan Dear and it is a strong pairing.

"I think the loyalty and trust between us shows in the car," says the driver.
"There are some people that switch and change navigators and then you kind of lose the connection that you have with somebody that you've been with for so many years."

RACING REPORTS

CASTLE COMBE: CRCC BY STEFAN MACKLEY

Photos: Ollie Read

OCTOBER 1





Adam Prebble was king of the saloon car outings

FISHER PICKS UP THE FORMULA FORD SPOILS

Felix Fisher claimed his maiden Castle Combe Formula Ford title with third place in the opening race enough to secure him the crown despite main rival Luke Cooper taking the victory.

Both had to give best to American Thomas Schrage in qualifying, the Team USA Scholarship driver taking a surprise pole on his first visit to the Wiltshire venue.

Fisher's Ray GR05 initially grabbed the lead off the line, before Cooper moved ahead on lap five of 10 at Quarry with Schrage following into second. The trio ran nose-to-tail

thereafter, but Cooper's Swift SC20 held firm as Fisher became the third member of his family – after dad Brian and brother Josh – to win an overall title at Castle Combe.

He capped the season off with his sixth win of the year in race two, Cooper and Schrage having both led at points before Fisher made the decisive move at Quarry.

Adam Prebble repeated older brother Gary's feat of winning the overall Castle Combe Saloon title back in 2002, having survived a one-lap shootout to the flag.

Abrief loss of power in Adam's Vauxhall Astra

allowed Gary to take the lead at inside the opening lap and was half distance, but just two tours later Gary's Seat Leon Cupra suffered a loss of oil pressure and stopped exiting Bobbies, prompting a late safety car. A backmarker between Robert Ellick's Audi TT and Adam at the restart ensured Adam took the win and the title.

The Super Mighty Mini title was another to be decided, with Neven Kirkpatrick claiming the honours after victory in an opener cut short by a multi-car crash at Quarry. Runner-up and outgoing champion Ian Slark got his revenge in the sequel, moving through from sixth to lead the reversed-grid race

neverheaded.

Craig Dolby was dominant in the Castle Combe GT race before damaging the rear bodywork on his Volvo S60 exiting Camp. The black and orange flag was deployed, and although the flapping bodywork detached, Dolby headed into the paddock and retired.

Newly crowned GT champion Kevin Bird (Porsche 991 Carrera Cup) took the win after race-long pressure from Dylan Popovic's Ginetta G50.

Chris Southcott's Honda Civic EK9 dominated both Castle Combe Hot Hatch races, but had to repass Sam Stride's similar machine in the opener after dropping behind on the opening lap.

Daniel Smith (Mercedes SLK) made his second attempt around the outside of Reuben Taylor's Peugeot 206 at Camp stick to win race one in the Intermarque Silhouettes. Ian Hales (Vauxhall Tigra), who had been unable to pass Taylor for second in the opener, duly won race two from Smith.

Invitational entry George Line (Dallara F308) won both Monoposto Tiedeman Trophy contests, but was kept honest by Jason Timms (Dallara F301) in the sequel.

RACE WINNERS

CCRC Race 1: **Formula** Neven **Ford** Kirkpatrick; Race 1: Luke Race 2: lan Cooper (Swift Slark SC20); Race 2: Felix Fisher

Saloons Adam Prebble (Vauxhall

CCRC Super Mighty Mini/ **Mighty Mini**

(Ray GR05)

CCRC

Astra)

CMMC Intermarque **Silhouettes** Race 1: Daniel

Smith

(Mercedes

Ian Hales

(Vauxhall

Tigra)

SLK); Race 2:

Monoposto

(Dallara F308)

Tiedeman

CCRC GTs Kevin Bird (Porsche 991 Carrera Cup)

CCRC Hot Hatch Races 1 & 2: Chris Southcott

(Honda Civic

EK9)

Trophy Races 1 & 2: George Line

Photos: Michael Chester

MONDELLO PARK: MPSC BY LEO NULTY

OCTOBER 2

MURPHY LANDS THE SEAT SILVERWARE

Shane Murphy retained his Seat Supercup Ireland title at Mondello Park on Sunday by winning the opening race from the outside of the front row, having beaten class newbie Harry McGovern away from pole.

Brian Berry took race two, which was truncated by a spectacular shunt on the main straight between Murphy and Graham McDonnell. Both drivers were fine, but McDonnell's car suffered significant damage.

Michael Cullen took two Irish Stryker wins despite the spectacular efforts of stand-in team-mate Rod McGovern and class-stalwart Andy Dalton. He wasn't so lucky later on as brake failure meant he spectacularly collected leader Max Turley in the closing stages of the opening Fiesta ST race. After the subsequent stoppage, Turley was awarded the win on countback, while in the second race, Christopher Grimes Jr held off Kian O'Brien for a superb first win, the two youngsters entertaining with a superb scrap.

Having missed the recent rounds, Keith Rabbitt drove well to climb through the pack and take the opening Fiesta Zetec race, from UK Mini Challenge star Jack Byrne who was making a cameo appearance, while Mondello's Phil Lawless took an equally popular win in race two, from Byrne and Michael Barrable, who claimed the title and a new lap record too.

With the 2022 championship already decided, Gavin Buckley dominated the nonchampionship Formula Vee race, finishing well ahead of Paul Lewis, who had displaced Stephen Morrin early on.

Codey Keogh took both Junior



Murphy won the title in the opening Seat encounter

Mini races, despite the best efforts of David Travers. The pair swapped places on numerous occasions in race two, with Travers becoming the inaugural class champion.

Michael Roche drove well to take a win in Formula BOSS Ireland, having grabbed the lead with a fantastic start from the second row, while class champion Sylvie Mullins was first across the line in race two, having scrapped mightily with the spectacular Jonathan Fildes early on.

Aaron Gaughran's third in race one was enough for him to clinch the title, while he harassed Mullins all the way to the flag in race two.

An on-form Peter Barrable took all three Legends wins, regardless of where he started and set a new class lap record in race three to boot.



Barrable was unstoppable in three Legends races

Irish Strykers Race1 & 2: Michael Cullen

Seat Supercup Ireland

Race1: Shane Murphy; Race 2: Brian Berry

Fiesta Zetec Race1: Keith Rabbitt: Race 2:

Fiesta ST Race 1: Max Turley; Race 2: Christopher

Phil Lawless

Grimes Jr

Formula Vee Gavin Buckley (Sheane)

Roche (Dallara

F306); Race 2:

Svlvie Mullins

Race1,2&3: Peter Formula Boss Barrable Ireland Race1: Michael

Mini Junior Challenge Race1&2: Codey Keoah

(Gould GR37)

Irish Legends

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RALLY REPORTS

CHRIS KELLY MEMORIAL RALLY: MANX AUTOSPORT BY PAUL LAWRENCE

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 1

TAYLOR RISES TO THE ISLAND CHALLENGE



Peter Taylor and Jack Morton were the masters of the Isle of Man as they took victory on an incredibly challenging Chris Kelly Memorial Rally.

While a fine performance from Steve Wood and Dale Bowen (Ford Fiesta WRC) secured the Asphalt Rally Championship crown for Wood with third place, the battle for overall victory came down to the contest between

Taylor's Fiesta WRC and the R5 version of Neil Roskell and Andrew Roughead and ultimately Taylor clinched victory by just 31 seconds after two hours of intense competition.

This was a tough rally with 127 stage miles on classic closed roads over two days and 16 special stages. A challenging rally was made even tougher by horrendous weather on Friday afternoon when lashing rain and

strong winds left the roads awash. The 45 crews that made it to the finish had all done incredibly well.

Wood admitted to three separate moments on the opening four-mile stage and he was not alone. One stage later, Mark Kelly and Neil Colman crashed their Skoda Fabia out of the early lead when they aquaplaned off a section of flooded road, taking down a telegraph pole in the

> Kennels stage. The rest of the Friday evening leg went ahead as planned as the rain stopped. As the survivors arrived back at Douglas, Roskell led Taylor by 22s, most of which Taylor had lost on the Baldwins stage. Wood was third overnight, 10s up on Stone and holding the championship advantage as Stone and Laura Connell (VW Polo R5) needed to beat both

> > to the title.

process. Roskell explained the site of Kelly's accident: "You came round a corner and there were the hedges and the road was flooded right across."

ARC title contender John Stone said: "Stage two was like driving up a riverbed!" The stage was cancelled due to Kelly's accident and the Ramsey town centre stage was cancelled before the rally due to a shortage of marshals.

Roskell narrowly led at the end of the first leg but next to go out, on Friday evening, was Irish pair Andrew Purcell and Andy Hayes who crashed their Skoda Fabia R5 out of third place on the second run of the narrow Dog

Wood made sure of the ARC title by holding off Stone, who had struggled with an electrical issue that prevented the Polo reaching maximum revs. Steve Simpson/Patrick Walsh (Fiesta Rally2) had a measured run to fifth from Darren Atkinson/ Phil Sandham (Ford Escort Mk2) who were best of the two-wheel drives with a mighty performance.

In the best Isle of Man style,

Saturday dawned bright and dry

for two loops of four stages over

75 classic stage miles. It was nip

Taylor until Taylor grabbed back

Roskell and secure an impressive

win. Taylor said: "I didn't think

we'd have the pace we did. We

"Well done to Peter; he's done

with that thing," he added of Taylor's Fiesta WRC.

fantastically. I just couldn't keep

and tuck between Roskell and

16s on Little London and then

pressed home his pace on the

final loop to ease ahead of

got it right in the Baldwins

today!"Roskell was quick

to congratulate the winner:

Other star drives included those of local ace George Collister in seventh in his BMW and Steve

Ormond-Smith who got his Mitsubishi Lancer E9 into the top 10 despite a fifth gear spin in St Marks that cost him several minutes. Uncle and nephew Simon and Nathan Summers just missed out on the top 10 after a mighty drive in their road rally Escort Mk2 Pinto while late retirements cost Stuart Egglestone, Maxx Bradshaw and Rob Smith the top-10



Roskell missed out on win after a nip-and-tuck battle

Organiser: Manx Autosport **When:** September 30/October 1 Championships: Motorsport UK Asphalt Rally Championship, HRCR Stage Masters, Welsh Tarmacadam, ANWCC, SD34 Stages: 16 Starters: 75 1 Peter Taylor/Jack Morton (Ford Fiesta WRC) 1h55m23s; 2 Neil Roskell/Andrew Roughead (Ford Fiesta R5) +31s; 3 Steve Wood/Dale Bowen (Ford Fiesta WRC); 4 John Stone/ Laura Connell (VW Polo GTi R5); 5 Stepher Simpson/Patrick Walsh (Ford Fiesta Rally2); 6 Darren Atkinson/Phil Sandham (Ford Escort Mk2); 7 George Collister/lan Postlethwaite (BMW 328i); 8 Richard Fishleigh/Jason McCullough (Ford Escort Mk2); 9 Carine Walker/Danii Matthews (BMW 325); 10 Steven Ormond-Smith/Dafydd Evans (Mitsubishi Lancer E9). Class winners: Lewis Gatt/Callum Yong (Ford Escort Mk2); James Nicholls/David Allman (Peugeot 205CTi); Simon Summers/ Nathan Summers (Ford Escort Mk2); Atkinson/Sandham; Ormond-Smith/Evans; William Mains/Aled Edwards (Vauxhall Nova); Danny Cowell/Will Price (Talbot Samba); Kevin Davies/Owain Davies (Ford Escort Mk2); Philip Shaw/Macklin Wilson (Vauxhall Nova); Martin Williams/Martin Allwood (Ford Escort Mk2).



Steve Wood finished third and was on top of the Asphalt points at the end

finishes they deserved.

PATRIOT STAGES: FORRESTERS CAR CLUB BY SIMON GRONOW

OCTOBER 2

NO STOPPING THE COLES ON THE CAERWENT BATTLE

Damian Cole was in a class of his own as he mastered the mixed conditions in his Skoda Fabia R5+ on his way to an emphatic win on the Patriot Stages.

Partnered by his daughter Charly, Cole was quickest on the slippery opening stage and, as the roads dried during the day, he was fastest on all of the remaining tests at Caerwent MOD Training Area to complete a comfortable victory.

Initially, Thomas Cooper and Paul Williams were Cole's nearest challenger before being forced to retire their Mitsubishi Lancer from second place with front differential problems, while electrical problems eliminated Welsh Championship leader Wayne Jones' Darrian GTR from third position and Richard Merriman retired his classleading Darrian T90 with a

broken driveshaft.

Drive of the day was surely that of Daniel and Keith Jones who were seeded at number 44.

After replacing a broken brake disc on their Renault Clio after the first stage, the pair were problem free on the rest of the event and went on to take a superb second overall on only their second visit to the venue.

In the battle for third, numberone seeds Kev Carr and Chris

Pippin had a good run on the later won their class after a great run in stages in their Ford Escort Mk2, overtaking Oliver Davies and Jack Bowen in a similar car on the event, Sam Mason and James penultimate test to secure the final Seymour enjoyed the slippery podium position.

Roskell and Wood to beat Wood

Also moving up the order on the final stages were Darrell Taylor and Dylan Thomas who took a class-winning fifth place in their Ford Fiesta R5, while Malcolm Jones and Rhys Jones dropped a place on the final stage, but still

their Peugeot 207 S1600.

In the Formula 1000 Junior early stages on their way to a 51s win in their Suzuki Alto.

Results

Organiser: Forresters Car Club When: October 2 Where: Caerwent **Championships:** Welsh National Tarmacadam Championship; CMSG Stage Rally Championship; ASWMC Stage Rally Championship; AWMMC Heart of England Rally

Championship: Formula 1000s: IPS Rally

Challenge. Stages: 6 Starters: 92. 1 Damian Cole/Charly Cole (Skoda Fabia R5+) 1h05m58s; 2 Daniel Jones/Keith Jones (Renault Clio) +3m06s; 3 Kev Carr/Chris Pippin (Ford Escort Mk2); 4 Oliver Davies/Jack Bowen (Ford Escort Mk 2); 5 Darrell Taylor/Dylan Thomas (Ford Fiesta R5); 6 Malcolm Jones Rhys Jones (Peugeot 207 S1600): 7 Dave Roberts/Nigel Perkins (Ford Escort Mk2); 8 Paul Morgan/Robbie Pugh (Honda Civic); 9 Paul Walker/Geraint Thomas (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 James Davies/Fiona Crump (Proton Satria GTi) Class winners: Dominic Hodge/Mathew Faulkner (Nissan Micra); Malcom Jones/Rhys Jones; Daniel Jones/Keith Jones; Steve Wilks/ Adam Wilks (Ford Escort Mk 2): Carr/Pippin Taylor/Thomas: Lee Sparrowhawk/Samuel Mvers (Subaru Impreza).

COLUMNIST

SID SMITH



The Fiesta Junior leader has just sampled Ginetta Junior too, and the 16-year-old has even bigger ambitions



have grown up with racing as my dad Rob raced, he won Le Mans in the GTE-Am class in 2017 and is an ELMS champion. I just loved every single bit of racing and always dreamed about becoming a racing driver, and it's actually starting to become true.

I started rental karting at about the age of five, and I was karting on and off for a few years. And then luckily because we're quite close with oval racing we got a drive in National Ministox for 2019. That's where I properly fell in love with it and realised I'm alright at this.

After a year on ovals we were looking at options for circuit racing because that's what my dad did and I love that sort of thing. The obvious option was Fiesta Junior.

Itested the car and fell in love with it, and I got a drive for 2020 and there was a big grid with some good racing. The 2020 season was more of a learning year, but for 2021 we did a lot of training over the winter, we made sure the car was the best of the best and we were looking strong after lots of testing and I was right up there on the pace the whole time.

And luckily we did that step again in Fiesta Junior in 2022. We've got six wins so far and plenty more podiums, despite being unlucky a couple of times, and we've got the championship lead.

Over time I've learnt a lot about car control, momentum, car handling and set-up: just things that you can't see from watching like how much every single tenth matters. I also learnt a lot of maturity in racing, because

you've got to find a good balance in maturity and aggression.

So it's really come alive for me this year and I took a big step up in my game as well because coming into this year I was the most determined I have been and more willing to go faster. And because of that we've managed to get a drive in a Ginetta Junior which I'm really pleased about, I just did my first round at Silverstone.

We always thought Ginetta Junior has the biggest grid and the closest racing. I also wanted to expand my motorsport knowledge because the more cars you can drive the better you are.

And driving the Ginetta really opened my eyes to the world of racing. It was quite difficult going from front-wheel drive to rearwheel drive and it was almost a completely different car so it was like relearning how to drive in a way. But by the end of the Silverstone weekend we were completely on the pace and battling with some of the top names.

I really loved it and the car was really good, a



Smith learnt from the aggressive Ginetta racing



Smith progressed year on year in Fiesta Junior

big thank you to Fox Motorsport for that. But the main difference I found was how aggressive everyone is in Ginetta Junior. It's a really high standard of driving so you're constantly in a battle, and if you're not aggressive enough then you just can't push through. So that's what I really liked about it: that you're constantly on edge and you constantly can't put a bad lap in.

Ifeel with the knowledge of the Fiesta and the Ginetta that it's really helped me to become a better driver and to be where I am now where we're hoping to go on to bigger better stuff in the future.

I also want to thank my dad for passing on his knowledge and making it all possible because he knows how the game works and that's really helped me progress. He also helps with the driving and car knowledge, so we can be the best of the best.

For the remainder of this year, I've got the Ginetta finale at Brands Hatch GP this weekend, I'm looking to get some more solid positions there, then we've got the Fiesta Junior finale that is also at Brands where I'm looking to wrap up the title.

We've got quite a few options for next season, and the end goal is to become a factory GT driver, where I can race with topclass drivers on top-class tracks really fighting for what I've always dreamed of.

With GT racing you have good hard close racing, the cars are more equal and it's exciting for fans and drivers. I also fell in love with the sound of the GT cars, the mechanical side, and it's just so exciting.

"It's really come alive for me this year and I took a big step up in my game"

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE REVIEW

It is quite the accolade to be so fast that a rival puts a protest in about you to find out what on earth is going on.

Seventeen-year-old Marcus Short has that accolade. And in this week's Motorsport News we check in with him to find out about five seconds. his rise within six months from being a sim competitor onboard footage of the

to a single-seater racer. And driving in the MG Car Club's MG Cup at Cadwell Park earlier this year, despite being in the slowest class of three in his Rover 216 GTi, he qualified third overall within seven tenths of pole. And he topped his class by

And you can watch

full qualifying lap, that contributed to befuddling his rivals, on his dad Martin Short's YouTube channel, at: youtube.com/ watch?v=Qsd8OAXQAmo. And if nothing else it's glorious Cadwell. A UK Nordschleife (albeit a shorter one) exists and it's in Lincolnshire.



Graham Keilloh Not Short on pace...

TV GUIDE

Formula 1 returns to magnificent Suzuka in Japan this weekend for the first time since pre-Covid times in 2019, and Sky Sports F1 warms us up today (Thursday) by showing the last four Japanese Grands Prix in full, starting at 1100hrs.

The channel then has the drivers' press conference this evening at 2330hrs-0030hrs, while the F1 Show weekend preview is first on tomorrow on both Sky Sports F1 and Sky Sports Main Event, after their live Friday practice coverage, at 0845hrs-0945hrs. Ted Kravitz's Notebooks are also on both channels with his qualifying review on

YOU!

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Formula 1 will head to Japan this time

Saturday at 0830hrs-0900hrs and the race version on Sunday at 0900hrs-0930hrs.

Channel 4's Japanese qualifying highlights meanwhile are on Saturday at 1050hrs-1220hrs and its race highlights are

Richard Salisbury's shot from the Trackrod Rally of a Fiat 131

on Sunday at 1230hrs-1500hrs.

While this evening you have another chance to watch the best of last weekend's World Rally Championship Rally New Zealand on ITV4

at 2000hrs-2105hrs.

LIVE TV

FORMULA 1

Practice 1: Friday, 0330hrs-0530hrs, Sky Sports F1; 0430hrs-0530hrs, Sky Sports Main Event

0645hrs-0845hrs,

0510hrs, Sky Sports F1; Sky Sports Main

0830hrs, Sky Sports F1; Sky Sports Main Event Race: Sunday,

0430hrs-0900hrs (start time 0600hrs), Sky Sports F1; Sky Sports Main Event

CHAMPIONSHIP BRANDS HATCH Races and supports: Sunday, 1030hrs-1830hrs,

DTM HOCKENHEIN

Race 1: Saturday, 1215hrs-1400hrs, BTSport4 Race 2: Sunday, 1215hrs-1400hrs, BTSport4

DTM TROPHY

Race 1: Saturday, 1400hrs-1500hrs, BTSport4

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS

Race: Sunday, 0100hrs-0815hrs, BTSport1

FERRARI CHALLENGE

Race 1: Saturday, 1420hrs-1525hrs, Sky Sports F1 Race 2: Sunday, 1420hrs-1525hrs, Sky Sports F1

CHARLOTTE Race: Sunday, 1830hrs-2300hrs, Premier Sports 2

WHAT'S ON

Jersey Rally

Jersey Motor Cycle and Light Car Club (spectators admitted) jerseyrally.com

Adgespeed Stages (Three Sisters)

Wigan Motor Club (spectators admitted) wiganmotorclub. org.uk

Oulton Park International, Cheshire

750MC meeting: Club Enduro, Alfa Romeo, Locost, 5Club MX-5,Toyota MR2 Starts racing from 1100hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) Admission adult£14, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0344 225 4422

SATURDAY-SUNDAY

■ Brands Hatch GP, Kent BTCC meeting: BTCC, Carrera Cup, F4, Ginetta GT4, Ginetta Junior, MINI Challenge **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1315hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1000hrs Admission adult £33 under 13 free Web msv. com Contact 0344 225 4422

Silverstone National, **Northants**

CSCC meeting: Sports Racing and V8s, Tin Tops, Swinging Sixties, Future Classics, Magnificent 7s, Modern Classics, Special Saloon and Modsports, Classic K. New Millennium. Open Series, Turbo Tin

Tops, Slicks Series Starts Saturday, racing from 1220hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1130hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Admission £16 Web silverstone.co.uk Tickets online only
Snetterton 300, Norfolk

MSVR meeting: GT Cup, Pickups, Snetterton Saloons, Z Cars, Racing Saloons, Production GTi **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1145hrs

(qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1045hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Admission adult £14, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact

0344 225 4422 Pembrey, S Wales Truck meeting: Trucks, MGOC, Junior Saloons,

Hyundai Coupe, Welsh Sports and Saloons Starts Saturday, racing from 1355hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0955hrs (qualifying from 0930hrs) Admission adult £18, under 13 free Web pembreycircuit. co.uk

SUNDAY Knockhill, Fife

SMRC meeting: SMRC meeting: C1 Cup, Fiesta ST, R53 Mini Cooper S, Classic Sports and Saloons, Mini Cooper Starts racing from 1105hrs (qualifying from 0930hrs) Admission adult £16, Web knockhill.com

Details correct at time of going to press, please check with organisers before travelling

WRITE TO US

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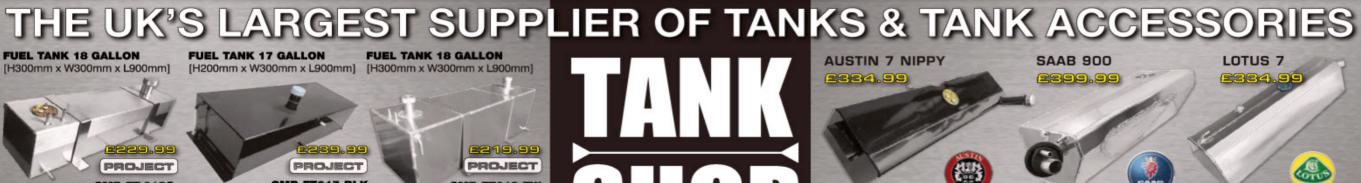
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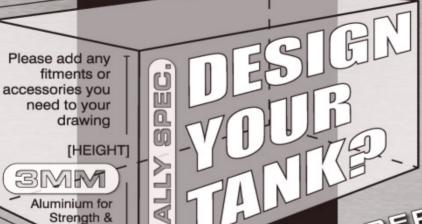
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